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MORAL ASPECT OF KARMA.

(A lecture delivered before the Adelphi T.S.)

Of all the teachings of the Esoteric Philosophy now given in the West, those relating to Karma and Re-incarnation have received the most favourable reception at the hands of the public; the latter is not our principal subject to-night, although it is impossible to exclude it as the chief method of working of Karma. This, as said in *The Secret Doctrine*, "is a word of many meanings, and has a special term for almost every one of its aspects. It means as a synonym of sin, the performance of some action for the attainment of an object of *worldly*, hence *selfish*, desire, which cannot fail to be hurtful to somebody else. Karman is action, the cause;" and Karma again is "the law of ethical causation; the *effect* of an act produced egotistically, when the great law of harmony depends on altruism." * To treat Karma as general action and reaction, would necessitate dealing with the whole universe; needless to say we shall not attempt that task to-night, and it will quite suffice to now confine ourselves to the moral aspect of Karma alone.

The conception of laws defined as "an established sequence of material phenomena," is universally admitted in physical science as ruling the visible world, and in modern philosophy, as we shall presently see, this idea of laws is accepted and applied, although with small success, to the ethical world. It is, I think, precisely because the Esoteric Philosophy can demonstrate a logical and scientific system of ethics that its teachings thereon have received the attention above indicated. It can be asserted with certainty that no progress can be made either in the moral, intellectual, or physical worlds, without a similar sequence of cause or effect. Supposing, for instance, I am a chemist, and discover by careful experiments in my laboratory that atmospheric air consists of a mechanical mixture of gases, twenty-one per cent. of oxygen and seventy-nine per cent. of nitrogen; to-morrow I find by exactly the same experiments that the proportions now materially differ from what they were yesterday. You will at once see that under such conditions my time has been wholly wasted, and no knowledge whatever acquired. To go farther, life being adjustment, as Herbert Spencer says, therefore the violent shifting of the ordinary factors of existence would render the physical world uninhabitable to beings like ourselves. Remembering then the ancient maxim, "As above so below," the reign of law must be posited in the moral and intellectual worlds, since it is seen in the physical. Obviously, chaos could not exist on the superior

* *The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. II., p. 302.

planes of life, and law and order rule the lower. With reference, however, to what was said before, I must not be supposed to hold that physical conditions are unchangeable, because if that were so, the continuity of progress would be destroyed, therefore Professor Huxley is right in considering the present laws of existence as nothing more than working hypotheses, true for the present, but not always presenting the same aspects to the human consciousness. In fact, according to Esoteric Philosophy, mind having to acquire experiences on the material plane, has to pass unmoved through all the slowly changing phases of the physical world. Many years ago George Combe knew something of this truth, and fought hard against the theologians of his day to establish the supremacy of law in the moral, intellectual, and physical worlds. He knew well that in order to progress man must understand external Nature and act in harmony with her laws, and invents a fable in the *Constitution of Man*, which I will now quote, so admirably does it illustrate the case :—

"It happened in a remote period, that a slater slipped from the roof of a high building, in consequence of a stone of the ridge having given way as he walked upright along it; he fell to the ground, had a leg broken, and was otherwise severely bruised. As he lay in bed suffering severe pain from his misfortune, he addressed Jupiter in these words:

"'O Jupiter, thou art a cruel god; for thou hast made me so frail and imperfect a being, that I had not faculties to perceive my danger, nor power to arrest my fall when its occurrence showed how horrible an evil awaited me. It were better for me that I had never been.'

"Jupiter, graciously bending his ear, heard the address, and answered, 'Of what law of mine dost thou complain?'

"'Of the law of gravitation,' replied the slater, 'by its operation, the step which my foot made upon the stone, which, unknown to me, was loose, precipitated me to the earth, and crushed my body, never calculated to resist such violence.'

"'I restore thee to thy station on the roof,' said Jupiter; 'I heal thy bruises, and to convince thee of my benevolence, I suspend the law of gravitation as to thy body and all that is related to it; art thou now content?'

"'The slater, in deep emotion, offered up gratitude and thanks, and expressed the profoundest reverence for so just and beneficent a deity. In the very act of doing so, he found himself in perfect health, erect upon the ridge of the roof; and, rejoicing, gazed around. He endeavoured to walk along the ridge to arrive at the spot which he intended to repair. But the law of gravitation was suspended, and his body did not press upon the roof. There being no pressure there was no resistance, and his legs moved backwards and forwards in the air without any progress being made by his body. Alarmed at this occurrence, he stooped, seized his trowel, lifted it full of mortar, and made the motion of throwing it on the slates; but the mortar, freed from the trowel, hung in mid-air—the law of gravitation was suspended as to it also. Nearly frantic with terror at such unexpected novelties, he endeavoured to descend in order to seek relief; but the law of gravitation was suspended as to his body, and it hung poised at the level of the ridge, like a balloon in the air. He tried to fling himself down, to get rid of the uneasy sensation, but his body floated erect and would not

move downwards. In an agony of consternation he called once more upon Jupiter. The god, ever kind and compassionate, heard his cry and pitied his distress; and asked:

"'What evil hath befallen thee now, that thou art not yet content? Have I not suspended, at thy request, the law which made thee fall? Now thou art safe from bruises, and from broken limbs; why, then, dost thou still complain?'

"The slater answered, 'In deep humiliation, I acknowledge my ignorance and presumption; restore me to my couch of pain, but give me back the benefits of thy law of gravitation.'

"'Thy wish is granted,' said Jupiter, in reply.

"The slater in a moment lay on his bed of sickness, endured the castigation of the organic law, was restored to health, and again mounted to the roof that caused his recent pain. He thanked Jupiter anew, from the depths of his soul, for the law of gravitation with its numberless benefits; and applied his faculties to study and obey it during the remainder of his life."*

We see from this, that it is idle for man to complain of the action of the physical laws of nature, and "the Occultists, who regard physical nature as a bundle of most varied illusions on the plane of deceptive perceptions; who recognise in every pain and suffering but the necessary pangs of incessant procreation: a series of stages toward an ever-growing perfectibility, which is visible in the silent influence of never-erring Karma, or *abstract* nature—the Occultists, we say, view the great mother otherwise."† Before we pass on to the consideration of the moral aspect of Karma, as shown in the Esoteric Philosophy, it will be desirable to briefly review the ethical teachings of the Christian Churches, and the conceptions of modern moral philosophy, in order to contrast them effectually with the Theosophical ideas. Let us begin with Theology.

The Churches have not brought forward their ethical teachings in such a form that a scientific and philosophical analysis can be readily made. But it will be doing the Christian statements no injustice if we predicate of them, that they have generally placed beliefs in sundry doctrines first, and moral conduct next. To do this, however, is to altogether destroy the idea of law, as scientifically defined, in the moral world, by introducing foreign and uncertain elements into it. That this is the case we shall plainly see later on. Again, it is a general Christian postulate, that there is an extra-cosmic Deity or personal God, whose will man must obey. But this conception is thoroughly unphilosophical for this reason: such a Deity being separate from the Universe is necessarily finite, the Universe being one thing and God another. The utterances of a limited and therefore fallible Deity, if such a being is thinkable, especially on ethical subjects, must count as opinions only, and could be in no sense imperative commands to men. Once we assume that belief in certain doctrines is necessary for salvation, we open the door to religious persecutions.

* *The Constitution of Man*, p. 85.

† *The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. II., p. 475.

Humanity has to thank the belief that the moral guide of man is outside himself, for almost endless religious wars and the seas of blood spilt therein. For all attempts to make the human race universally recognise one form of religion, or one code of ethics, must of necessity fail; humanity is obviously included between the two extremes of the highly civilized races and the lowest barbarians, in other words mankind is enormously differentiated, and therefore in all stages of development. That, for instance, which is orthodox in London is blasphemy in Constantinople, the virtues of some races are considered to be vices in others, and even in any one community persons are found differing widely in their conceptions of morality, until we come down to that class whom Dr. Carpenter in his *Human Physiology* calls the morally insane. These considerations absolutely prevent our seeking for moral guidance outside ourselves, and as only two sources are possible for this, without or within, the latter alone remains to be considered. We may now deal with the ethical conceptions of Modern Philosophy.

In the most prominent school of thought in our time, the present standard of ethical conduct is considered to be due to the evolutionary experiences of humanity; in Professor Fisk's words, "Inquiry will result in the conviction that the moral sense is not ultimate, but derivative, and that it has been built up out of slowly organised experiences of pleasures and pains."* I need not consume our time to-night by making an elaborate criticism of this position, but will confine myself to bringing forward one or two important objections to it. In the first place, it cannot be shown that our present humanity derives its ethical knowledge from custom, etc. For history tells us that the progress of humanity is by no means in a straight line, we see that great nations rise, flourish, decay, and often die, leaving nothing but a few ruins and fragments of literature for posterity behind them. How much benefit, for example, have we derived ethically from the high and complex civilisation of the ancient Egyptians? therefore the moral heredity theory falls to the ground. But even supposing it to be true, a further and weightier objection remains; according to this system humanity is always improving, generation after generation, until, in the course of time, a race of men will inhabit the earth exhibiting, perhaps, perfect qualities compared with ourselves to-day. But this idea appears to me to be immoral in itself, and therefore in no sense worthy of being considered as a system of ethics, because what is the end to be attained? in order that a mere remnant of the human family shall some day in the far future stand on a lofty pinnacle of goodness and knowledge, myriads of men must be more or less sacrificed during the process. A strange philosophy this, for mark, not even the few named will survive the solar

* *Outlines of Cosmic Philosophy*, Vol. II., p. 321.

cataclysm, which according to science awaits the earth; all the sufferings and miseries of humanity, to say nothing of the other kingdoms of Nature, will have been for nothing, chaos and ancient night will ultimately reign supreme despite it all. The error in all this arises from taking the outer physical man as the real entity, disregarding Krishna's statement, "Never did I not exist, nor you, nor those rulers of men; nor will any one of us hereafter cease to be."* So far then, neither Church Christianity, nor Modern Philosophy has yielded to our enquiries a reasonable and satisfactory method of ethics, and we may now turn to the ideas of the Old Wisdom Religion on the subject.

"Karma-Nemesis is the synonym of Providence, minus *design*, goodness and every other *finite* attribute and qualification, so unphilosophically attributed to the latter. An Occultist or a philosopher will not speak of the goodness or cruelty of Providence; but identifying it with Karma-Nemesis, he will teach that nevertheless it guards the good and watches over them in this, as in future lives; and that it punishes the evil-doer—aye, even to his seventh rebirth. So long, in short, as the effect of his having thrown into perturbation even the smallest atom in the infinite world of Harmony, has not been finally re-adjusted. For the only degree of Karma—an eternal and immutable degree—is absolute Harmony in the world of matter as in the world of Spirit. It is not, therefore, Karma that rewards or punishes, but it is we, who reward or punish ourselves according to whether we work with, through and along with nature, abiding by the laws on which that Harmony depends, or—break them."†

According to this then, Harmony is the Law of the Universe and Discord necessarily evil, therefore the task that now remains before us to-night is to examine these principles in detail and discover their bearing with regard to man. Hitherto we have often mentioned the terms morality and ethics without being able to get a clear idea in the mind as to how they arise in the scheme of things, bnt I hope to soon now show their position in the evolution of man. In Theosophical books the Karma attaching to acts is described as analogous to the law seen on the physical plane, expressed in the formula, that action and reaction are equal and opposite, the force always coming back to the centre from which it came.

But it has been objected to me by a student that a force started in a limitless Universe could not come back to its starting point. The answer to this is that all forces are governed by the law of rhythm of motion; in Professor Fisk's words, "the leaves, the branches, the very trees themselves, shivering in the gusts, the waving of the blades of grass, and of the stalks in the cornfield, the ripple marks on the river's bed, the vibration following the propellor's rotation in a screw steamer. In the currents of commerce, production and consumption, or in the tabulated diagrams of prices, births, marriages, deaths, disease, crime and pauperism, the

* *Bhagavat Gita*, C. II.

† *The Secret Doctrine*, Vol I., p. 643.

rhythm always appears." This law is also shown in the circling of the stars, the ebb and flow of the tides, and the succession of days and nights. All forces then move in cycles or circles, and therefore must return to the point of departure, or in other words, those who set causes in motion, must inevitably experience the effects on themselves.

It will be well to now inquire in what direction the Law of Harmony now works, and to do this will necessitate a brief examination of the process of Cosmic Involution and Evolution, set forth in Esoteric Philosophy. At the outset of a great life cycle, or Day of Brahmâ as it is called in the East, "the Universe passes out of its homogeneous subjectivity on to the first plane of manifestation, of which planes there are seven, we are taught. With each plane it becomes more dense and material until it reaches this, our plane, on which the only world approximately known and understood in its physical composition by science, is the planetary or Solar system."* This is to say, putting it in the language of modern philosophy, that the homogeneous Essence at the base of things differentiates, assuming more and more complex forms as it descends. Now, when this Cosmic process, or the outbreathing of Brahm, has reached the lowest point, or accomplished half of the cycle of objective existence, the reverse action begins, and the inbreathing sets in, or Unity instead of differentiation is now the law, and this process must continue until homogeneity is again reached, plus experience. As we have passed the lowest point of the cycle, our governing Karma is now Unity. Such then is the law. I may now state that—

"Karma may be of three sorts, (*a*) presently operative in this life through the appropriate instruments; (*b*) that which is being made or stored up to be exhausted in the future; (*c*) Karma held over from past life or lives and not operating yet because inhibited by inappropriateness of the instrument in use by the Ego, or by the force of Karma now operating."†

We are therefore all engaged in now generating causes, the consequences of which will be experienced in the future, and experiencing now the effects of the causes we have set in motion in the past, and also must have stored up Karma, not yet precipitated for want of an appropriate vehicle: for it is taught that, "In the life of worlds, races, nations, and individuals, Karma cannot act unless there is an appropriate instrument provided for its action." A question may here occur to some of you, and one which is very important, it is this. Must the effect of Karma generated in the past, be fully experienced now or in the future? The answer to this is, "The effects may be counteracted or mitigated by the thoughts and acts of oneself or of another, and then the resulting effects represent the combination and interaction of the whole number of causes involved in

* *Key to Theosophy*, p. 85.

† *The Path*, March, 1893, "Aphorisms on Karma," p. 366.

producing the effects." Therefore, as stated in a recent number of the *Vahan*, one may pay into the Karmic bank in copper, so to speak, and draw out in gold. It would indeed be an extraordinary thing if we could not balance up or reduce our bad Karma with the opposite kind of thoughts, words and actions. But there is a difficulty in the quotation just given, that requires clearing up.

How can Karmic effects be counteracted by the efforts of oneself or of *another?* I think the reply will be, that as no single individual can alone generate Karma, without the participation to a greater or lesser extent of others in the act, so any of those thus concerned can set in motion counterbalancing causes. You will remember it is said in the *Key* that :—

"It is held as a truth among Theosophists, that the interdependence of humanity is the cause of what is called Distributive Karma, and it is this law which affords the solution to the great question of collective suffering and its relief. It is an occult law, moreover, that no man can rise superior to his individual failings, without lifting, be it ever so little, the whole body of which he is an integral part. In the same way, no one can sin, nor suffer the effects of sin, alone. In reality, there is no such thing as 'separateness;' and the nearest approach to that selfish state, which the laws of life permit, is in the intent or motive."*

If any of you will examine the simplest actions that you do, you will perceive the truth of the foregoing statement; you will always find that the action or actions of others has affected your own, as regards time and place, if in no other particular. Let us now further develope the idea of this law of unity, or harmony in Nature.

Physical science asserts that I cannot move my little finger without disturbing every atom in the universe, and if this statement was untrue, there would be no cosmos, but chaos. But, as is astronomically shown, the Universe is connected in all its parts and is governed by certain common laws. Coming down to the physical bodies of men, we see that these are all connected together so intimately, that in cases of disease, medical science insists upon the isolation of patients, and the observance of strict sanitary measures. One case of cholera in an East End slum is felt to threaten the whole city, and if unity is thus seen to be the law on the plane of physical existence, with how much more force will this law operate on planes of higher and finer order? For it is easily seen that starting from homogeneity, as we do, the planes of being farthest from this will be the grossest and most separate in form, whilst the nearest will necessarily be the finest and least differentiated. It is thus evident that there is good reason for the statement made in Theosophical writings, that action on the spiritual and mental planes is much more potent, both for good or ill, than force exerted in the physical or grosser worlds. Experimental psychology

* *Key to Theosophy*, p. 203.

well exhibits the power of thought on its own plane, and its subtle nature, traversing, as in clairvoyance, seas and continents, swifter than light, and enabling an operator to control even the heart beats of his subject, in the magnetic sleep.

In a very complex and difficult subject like the one we are discussing, it is almost impossible to keep in a straight course, so numerous and necessary are the digressions in which we may indulge in order to illustrate it, but let us now return to an examination of the basis of ethics or morals, and endeavour to get a clear idea of the moral aspect of Karma. To do this will necessitate our return to a point, previously partly discussed, in our view of the ethical teachings of modern Christianity. We saw then that the idea that moral law proceeds from a deity external to man was illogical, and could not receive the sanction of sound philosophy; hence the ethical criterion could only proceed from within. But here we come to the all-important question, that, granting that the impulse to do right and avoid doing wrong, manifests itself as the voice of the conscience in man, yet what is this in itself, and why should it be obeyed?

Dealing with external Nature, we just now saw that notwithstanding the evils which appeared on the surface to attend the process, that man has no option, assuming that he desires to preserve his physical existence, but to obey and act in accordance with the physical laws he sees working around him, life being adjustment, and that the end attained by so doing was the gaining of experience and progress. So far this is clear, but we now come into contact with a very different set of factors, in dealing with the internal problem for its solution, and in order to see this properly, it will be best to set forth the distinctions between the two in a thorough manner, taking the external one first. If, for instance, I throw my physical body over a high precipice, the effect of the law of gravitation on it, will be such as to put an end to my physical existence; in this case we see that cause and effect are not separated in time, the latter follows closely on the former, and can be directly connected therewith as a certain consequence. The law of Karma in its physical aspect is obvious here. On the other hand, supposing I commit an action which, although highly disapproved of by my conscience, and condemned openly by public opinion, yet is practically ignored by the latter—there are many such cases, as we all know, in our present civilization, unfortunately for it—then, there being no fear of human law, or social ostracism, I am apparently free, unless it can be shown how, and in what way, every action, no matter what its character, must be followed by its appropriate result. There is, however, no difficulty in arriving at a theoretical judgment in this case, for it is a rooted principle in the mind, founded, doubtless, on millenniums of experience, like all other innate ideas, that causes must not

only produce effects, but effects adequate to, and commensurate with their origins. But the practical question still remains to be answered: "Here are rich wicked men who die in their beds, happy, with a shrine at the end of it," * and yet Karma is posited as "an undeviating and unerring tendency in the Universe to restore equilibrium, and it operates incessantly." † The answer to this is "the apparent stoppage of this restoration of equilibrium is due to the necessary adjustment of disturbance at some other spot, place, or focus which is visible only to the Yogi, to the Sage, or the perfect Seer: there is therefore no stoppage, but only a hiding from view."

According to this, then, the apparent disseverance between cause and effect only takes place in time, and we shall be better able to appreciate the significance of this statement when we come to an analysis of the relations between space and time forms, and the mind, later on. Philosophically considered, Karma cannot be subject to phenomenal time, because it is, itself, the producer of all time forms. Thus Krishna says:—"What goeth forth from me, causing all life to live, is Karma called: and manifested in divided forms."‡ It is also taught:—"In the life of worlds, races, nations, and individuals, Karma cannot act unless there is an appropriate instrument provided for its action: and until such appropriate action is found, that Karma related to it remains unexpended."¶ Purely physical Karma, then, differs from other kinds in the fact that, the immediate cause being always started in the physical world, a vehicle is always thus provided for the appropriate effect, and therefore our brain mind is generally able to note the connection between the two. But we should not forget that Eastern metaphysics holds that effects do not really succeed causes, but only appear to do so when measured in physical time: cause and effect being one, on the superphysical planes of existence. All physical actions, however, have obviously their subjective side in the world of thought, but in addition to these, there are those mental actions or thoughts, which arise and are exhausted on their own plane alone, and as all the planes are closely interwoven, moral or mental Karma can be exhausted on their own or any lower planes according to circumstances. From these considerations it logically follows that no one except a true seer can judge another's Karma.

"Hence while each receives his deserts, appearances may deceive, and birth into poverty or heavy trial may not be punishment for bad Karma, for Egos continually incarnate into poor surroundings where they experience difficulties and trials, which are for the discipline of the Ego, and result in strength, fortitude, and sympathy."

* *Report of Proceedings*, The Theosophical Congress, World's Fair of 1893, p. 153.

† "Aphorisms on Karma," *Path*, India, 1893, p. 366.

‡ *Song Celestial*, p. 67.

¶ "Aphorisms on Karma," *Path*, India, 1893, p. 367.

It may be now objected that although I have theoretically posited the existence of superphysical planes of life, yet the idea has not been reasonably demonstrated; this, however, will present no real philosophical difficulty, as I am about to show.

Have men of science yet discovered all the secrets of Nature? As suredly not, or they would all cease working; on the contrary, they are perpetually making new discoveries: fresh stars in astronomy, new elements in chemistry, facts in electricity, physiology, &c., and know that they will continue so to do. In this case then, the sum total of knowledge of Nature possessed by the human race at any particular time, cannot be the whole of it, therefore there is always existing a supersensible world outside our normal sense consciousness. For who will contend that newly discovered facts do not exist before their discovery? As well contend that the light of the stars is created anew each time the sun retires, whereas we all know that they are shining in daylight, and that the absence of the sun is merely the condition of their manifestation. There is, then, a metaphysical world, or thought plane, which is constantly becoming objective, or visible physically to humanity, as the latter advances in knowledge and perception. Objective or visible Nature has thus a subjective or invisible side, and in this metaphysical world such moral or mental Karma as will manifest in time, when a fitting vehicle is provided, is stored up. But the existence of a metaphysical world implies the existence of a metaphysical man to cognize it:—

"For, inasmuch as the phenomena of our plane are the creation of the perceiving Ego—the modifications of its own subjectivity—all the 'states of matter representing the aggregate of perceived objects,' can have but a relative and purely phenomenal existence for the children of our plane. As the modern idealists would say, the co-operation of subject and object results in the sense-object or phenomena."*

Hence the existence of an inner Ego or superior Consciousness in man is proved, and we shall presently see what an important bearing this fact has on the moral problem we are discussing.

If at the outset to-night, I touched on causes and effects in the sensual world, or physical Karma, alone, without reference to any moral or mental considerations, it was not, as I just now observed, because these questions can be thus separated, but merely to obtain an unassailable base in the lowest world, and reason upwards from it, as in this case effects and their *immediate* causes are a matter of common experience, and therefore undoubted, but the ethical problem *per se* now confronts us and must be solved.

It has been just proved that according to philosophy a metaphysical man or inner Ego exists, and as we all know that conscience exists, we may

* *The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. I., p. 329.

conclude that these are different terms for the same truth, but as Du Prel observes:—

"The question is not as to the existence of a conscience, but as to the duty of obeying it; not how moral development has proceeded, how social ethics have arisen, but whether there is a metaphysical ethic, whether the moral development of mankind, which might just as easily have been a false development, is a progress, and has its ground in the ethical significance of the world. For the monistic doctrine of the soul, the moral imperative comes ultimately from the transcendental subject.*

"Thus the subject ceases to be foreign, but as authority remains; and even though proceeding from our own subject, it is still not to be presupposed as *petitio principii*. There remains, as before, the question how such a conflict of two wills in us is possible, and of the obligation to obey the transcendental will. The existence of a conflict presents no difficulty; the situation of a pre-existing subject, a member of the transcendental order of things, is so thoroughly different from that of its transient phenomenal form in the world of sense, that a difference in the directions of the wills must result of itself. If now the subject, by reason of its better acquaintance with things metaphysical, appears in a world of moral significance as the better part of us in the voice of conscience, yet must the reverse be likewise possible; the subject also, according to its moral nature, is a product of development; we can therefore by no means ascribe to it a sanctity of nature in opposition to the unholy nature of its earthly phenomenal form. Were the greater morality always on the side of the subject, and were every revolt of the person against the subject already, as such, immoral, then could the terrestrial existence have no educational value, the subject could not be enriched by the moral fruits of this existence, the earthly phenomenal form could not advance it. Our moral consciousness can thus erect itself against the innate dispositions as the higher, and in each of its conquests there is a progress aimed at in a righteous revolt of the person against the subject. So that, if the revolt of person against subject is in the interest of the latter, it then ceases to be immoral."†

We can quite agree with Du Prel's foregoing remarks that if the metaphysical man, or Ego, was a being quite separate from the personal man, then there would be no necessity for the latter to obey the will of the former, although it assumed the form of the voice of conscience. But

"Occultism teaches that physical man is one, but the thinking man septenary, thinking, acting, feeling, and living on seven different states of being or planes of consciousness, and that for all these states and planes the permanent Ego (not the false personality) has a distinct set of senses."‡

Confirming this, the phenomena of the magnetic sleep shows that the subject exhibits a more and more extended consciousness as the deeper states are entered, and pursuing this idea logically, we arrive by the reverse process to that we just now employed, when dealing with the starting of the great life cycle—*viz.*, then from above, and now from

* *Metaphysical Man.*

† *Philosophy of Mysticism*, Vol. II., p. 297.

‡ *Transactions, Blavatsky Lodge*, No. I, p. 60.

below—at Universal Mind or the One Supreme Consciousness. As *The Secret Doctrine* puts it :—

"Cosmic Ideation focussed in a principle or upadhi (basis) results as the consciousness of the individual Ego. Its manifestation varies with the degree of upadhi, *e.g.*, through that known as *Manas* it wells up as mind-consciousness; through the more finely differentiated fabric (sixth state of matter) of the *Buddhi*, resting on the experience of Manas as its basis—as a stream of spiritual intuition." *

Thus the personal Ego or man is a manifestation in this world of the Supreme Self, the fount of all intelligence in the Universe, whilst the metaphysical or inner Ego is also a manifestation of It on a higher plane; therefore the various principles of man described in Theosophy are all aspects of Atma or the One Life, and obedience on the part of the personal Ego to the voice of conscience is submission to the will of the Supreme Principle, with whom the former is essentially identical. We have now arrived at a true basis for moral conduct, which is the fulfilment of the Law of Harmony or Unity, or action in thorough accordance with all other parts of self, a true brotherhood of man.

It may be well, now, to inquire into the method of Karma, after dealing with the moral principle involved, and try to discover the functions of the personal Ego in relation to the inner man; obviously, the content of the consciousness of the former being confined to the physical world, is extremely small when compared with that of the latter, which has no such limitations, inasmuch as experimental psychology shows that the higher consciousness includes the lower, and also brings forward elements of its own; thus we find that the inner Ego has a measure of space and time quite different from the physical concepts of these appertaining to the Personality or rather, it would be safer to say that the former has no such phenomenal limitations. Now, if there is to be any true progress of humanity at all, the totality of its experiences must be preserved for it in some way, and you will remember that we had to reject the Spencerian philosophy precisely for want of such a medium—it seems, therefore, that exactly such a storehouse so to speak, is furnished for us by this transcendental consciousness, which defies the forms of time and space, and moreover is the organizing principle in us, for—

"The prognosis of somnambulists would not be possible without intuitive knowledge of the laws of the inner life; the prescriptions of somnambulists would be of no value if they did not come from the same subject which accomplished the critical inspection and knew the laws of the development of disease. But all these phenomena would be impossible, were not the transcendental subject at the same time the organizing principle in us." †

* *The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. I., p. 329.

†*Philosophy of Mysticism*, Vol. I., p. 152.

We shall presently see what an important factor this principle is in the relations between the inner and personal Egos. Taking, then, into account the necessity for a permanent memory in man, of the whole of his past, without which there can be no individual or even racial progression, and seeing that the transcendental consciousness provides this memory, the reason why the inner Ego, speaking as the voice of conscience, can guide the personality is apparent.* For even physical science is convinced that man is very old, and according to the Esoteric Philosophy, many of us came on this earth 18,000,000 years ago. No slight experience this. But, as you will see, reincarnation now presents itself as the only method that the Permanent Man possesses, in order to store up all the experiences of this world. Obviously the personal man cannot and does not do this; but if the inner Ego manifests in a series of bodies, becoming in short, a number of persons, on the physical plane, such actual experiences must be acquired and stored up. It now remains to consider under what conditions such manifestations take place, and their relations to phenomenal time and space.

Each personality appears on earth with a character, and various idiosyncrasies, moral, mental and physical; these obviously limit our progress and freedom in every direction, and as objective obstructions, physical bodies, distances, etc., are easily recognised. But we just now saw, that visible or objective nature possessed an invisible or subjective side, therefore by parity of reasoning, all space forms or bodies must also possess their subjective side. In fact this is so, and the subjective side of phenomenal space is time, for the relation between these two is exactly the same as that between matter or force; or phenomenal space and matter are identical, and also force or time, as Du Prel says:

"Matter and force in their disunion, as dead matter and immaterial force, are mere abstractions of the mind, are therefore never in experience found apart, and their apparent dualism is referable to a dualism in our powers of perception, since it pertains to the position of the psycho-physical threshold whether the force side or the material side of the nature of things is perceived, they being always present together, and only distinguishable in thought. Every force acting upon us must thus have its material side, even if it is not sensible to us. What is for us insensible is not, therefore, immaterial."† "The more the material side of a thing presents itself to us, as in a block of granite, the more its force side disappears from us, and we then speak of dead matter. The more, on the other hand, the force side emerges, as, for instance, in thought, the more its material side disappears, and we then speak of immaterial forces. But it is quite inadmissible to regard this ideal distinction of force and matter, mind and body, as a real separation, and to hypostasize these two sides of a thing as independent."

* Here a further and deeper problem presents itself, *viz.*, that of the relations between the Inner Ego and the Divine Ego (Buddhi), but into this I cannot now enter.

† *Philosophy of Mysticism*, Vol. II., p. 131.

If therefore, we change our normal state of consciousness, or as Du Prel puts it above, alter the position of the psycho-physical threshold, a new aspect of Nature appears to us, the objective side becomes subjective, and *vice versâ;* thus time would be objective and space subjective under such conditions, and in connection with this matter you will doubtless remember that in Swendenborg's astral journeys, passage from point to point in space was attained by changing states of consciousness, time in this case being objective, and space subjective to his mind.

Kant long ago proved that space and time are but the forms of our normal consciousnesss, and we have therefore now to consider how the Ego in its personal aspect surrounds itself with time and space forms, and thus differentiates in consciousness from its transcendental self, or the inner man. Moral and mental Karma naturally arises from the actions of man in the thought world, the will, or the great spiritual force belonging to the Ego, acting through desire, moulds and shapes the plastic substance of the thought plane ; then this process is repeated on all the lower planes—the formed matter of each plane acting as force on the substance of the next lowest—until a form is thus produced in the physical world. We should not forget, as well understood in modern philosophy, that man cannot create new ideas, but can only modify and alter pre-existing thought forms, as

"Occultism teaches that no form can be given to anything, either by Nature or by man, whose ideal type does not already exist on the subjective plane. More than this, that no such form or shape can possibly enter man's consciousness, or evolve in his imagination, which does not exist in prototype, at least as an approximation."*

Hence the Ego in matter has to struggle against a multitude of Karmic forms, physical, mental, etc., produced by itself and the race in past incarnations, before it can be emancipated therefrom, and being thus involved in such Karma renders it a task of extreme difficulty to escape from our self produced mental, moral and physical environment. Dealing now with the Ego's self-produced physical body and its qualities, we saw before that each objective body in space must have its subjective or time side, the latter of course being invisible or subjective only to our physical consciousness, therefore our physical bodies like all others must be subject to a time cycle determined by our past Karma, which confines our physical existence within its limits, and minor cycles must likewise govern all the cells of which our bodies are made up; and doubtless similar laws control the four lower principles of our nature, or the planes of form. For

"Occultism teaches that (*a*) the life-atoms of our (*Prana*) life-principle

* *The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. I., p. 282.

are never entirely lost when a man dies. That the atoms best impregnated with the life-principle (an independent, eternal, conscious factor) are partially transmitted from father to son by heredity, and partially are drawn once more together and become the animating principle of the new body in every new incarnation of the Monads. Because (*b*) as the individual soul is ever the same, so are the atoms of the lower principles (body, its astral, or *life-double*), and drawn as they are by affinity and Karmic law always to the same individuality in a series of various bodies, etc., etc."*

Why, therefore, Occult Philosophy considers time cycles of such paramount importance is clear, and we can also trace the reason why moral and mental Karma—unlike purely physical Karma, which exhibits its *immediate* causes and effects in such close objective connection that the relations between them are generally easily seen—generated always on a subjective plane of consciousness and sometimes exhausted there, is often difficult for the personal Ego to recognise, solely because the content of its consciousness is limited, and its attention far too much directed to exterior things. Hence subjective or invisible Karma assumes a visible or objective form, whenever the space side becomes apparent, a result that arises from the shifting of the psycho-physical threshold of consciousness of the personal man. Whenever the latter fails to recognise the Karma of its actions this is due to its ignorance, and such actions will certainly be repeated until the necessary lesson is learnt, and experience thus acquired. In addition to this, how many of us, to-day, are constantly acting in a manner which we *know* will have bad effects, and refusing to alter, until after a great waste of time and energy the pain produced by our opposition to the law proves too great to withstand, and we resign the fruitless struggle—perhaps after many lives that ought never to have been entered upon.

Let us now apply the doctrine of stored-up Karma to our last quotation from *The Secret Doctrine*, respecting the fate of the lower human principles at the death of a personality.

"The appropriateness of an instrument for the operation of Karma consists in the exact connection and relation of the Karma with the body, mind, intellectual and psychical nature acquired for use by the Ego in any life, and every instrument used by any Ego in any life is appropriate to the Karma operating through it."†

From this it follows that, granting the fact of stored Karma, the atoms composing the four lower principles which are the vehicles for *such* Karma, will not at the rebirth of the Ego to whom they belong, form part of its lower principles, but will do so at some future time, when this particular Karma must manifest. Thus the difference betwixt the physical, psychic,

* *The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. II., p. 272.

† *The Path*, March, 1893, "Aphorisms on Karma," p. 368.

and mental make up, or various suits of clothes the permanent Ego wears in its long series of lives, is accounted for.

We are now in a position to estimate the difference in aim between the desires of the inner and personal Egos, the latter constantly wishes to act in accordance with the welfare of its own narrow self, regardless of the good of others, whom in its blindness it fails to recognise as other parts of self, whilst the former seeks, as we should expect from the nature of its expanded, transcendental consciousness, the welfare of all beings, in conformity with the essential law of Unity. Egotism is thus the motive of the personal man, whilst Altruism is the law of the Higher Man, as Du Prel says :—

"So through our whole life is protracted the strife between our earthly phenomenal form, and our true transcendental being. What is beautiful from the point of view of the subject is not beautiful from that of the person, and therefore remains *caviare* for the multitude; and actions, ethically valuable from the standpoint of the subject, are worthless and unintelligible from that of phenomenal Egoism. Nay, life itself, from the standpoint of earthly consciousness a vale of tears, is from the standpoint of transcendental consciousness a valuable possession, not in spite of suffering, but on account of it. But we who are to participate in the transcendental order of things should not surrender ourselves to the illusions of the earthly consciousness, this veil of Maya; we should bring the earthly will to silence in the æsthetic contemplation of nature, in the ethical formation of our life, and should regard this earthly existence as a transitory phenomenal form in correspondence with our transcendental interest."*

"The impulse to incarnation is only explicable if the sufferings of life are of transcendental advantage to the subject, which has wholly different interests from the earthly person. The transcendental advantage of the earthly life appears even on two sides to be greater, the more evil we experience. Necessity is the mother of inventions, but also of Christian sympathy; so that necessity advances both the historical progress of the race and the moral progress of the individual."†

The great aim of the inner Ego being to unite the personality to itself, we must regard as evil all the actions of the latter which tend to retard or hinder that result, and those as good which are in harmony with it. Hence there is no absolute evil in the world, and evil is relative to good. There could be no law of Good, Harmony or Unity in the Universe, had not differentiation first existed, as the necessary counterpart of the other, duality being the law of manifested being.

We now approach the old problem of Free Will and Necessity, and must show a solution. The factors involved in the question and to be reconciled are as follows. Every act has a cause, and the latter is in turn itself the effect of a cause, and hence we can construct a beginningless and endless chain of causes and effects; this being undoubtedly true, how then can Free Will be introduced—and we all feel that we have such a thing—

* *Philosophy of Mysticism*, Vol. II., p. 165.

† *Ibid*, p. 220.

into this iron circle of necessity? But let us note at the outset, that what we call causes and effects take place in phenomenal space and time, and are therefore subject to those forms of the mind, whilst, on the contrary, the will of our Ego wells up from the deepest planes of our being. This being so, can we then at the same time preserve the freedom of the will and yet recognise an unalterable sequence of events in the phenomenal world? Kant sets his great intellect to work on this problem, and we may now see the conclusions at which he arrived, and then compare them with the solution that the Esoteric Philosophy can give on this point. He says, after his examination of the conditions :—

"Thus, then, in our investigation into free actions and the causal power which produced them, we arrived at an intelligible cause, beyond which, however, we cannot go; although we can recognize that it is free, that is, independent of all sensuous conditions, and that, in this way, it may be the sensuously unconditioned condition of phenomena. But for what reason the intelligible character generates such and such phenomena, and exhibits such and such an empirical character under certain circumstances, it is beyond the power of our reason to decide. The problem was merely this—whether freedom and natural necessity can exist without opposition in the same action? To this question we have given a sufficient answer; for we have shown that as the former stands in a relation to a different kind of conditions from those of the latter, the law of the one does not affect the law of the other, and that, consequently, both can exist together in independence of and without interference with each other." *

Thus Kant found an intellectual solution of the problem, although, not knowing the teachings of the Esoteric Philosophy respecting the constitution of man as we now do, he could not grasp the details. He clearly saw, however, that in a realm free from the limitations of phenomenal space and time, necessity did not exist, because no chain of causes and effects exists there to bind; everything happens at once, to use a rough and inadequate expression, in that world. It is true that the personal man is always hampered, and sometimes completely controlled, by his mental and physical environment during any one life on the physical plane, but the Ego in this case is within the world of causes and effects, and thus subject to time and space through the forms or Maya of these that it has itself produced, and therefore must experience the Karma of them. But through the connection between the inner and personal Egos, the latter, inside the barrier of this self-produced necessity, has its own field of freedom of action, this free sphere being created by the action of the personal will; this force being a differentiation of the will of the inner Ego, and thus is the weapon with which the personality struggles with more or less success against its self-imposed destiny.

All of us, at each moment of time, are busily engaged in contracting or expanding our further spheres of freedom of action according to the

* *Critique of Pure Reason*, Meiklejohn's Translation, p. 344.

character of our present thoughts, words, and acts. Therefore it can be said that the inner Ego is free, and the personality partially free and partially self-bound, obtaining more and more freedom, from the bonds of matter, the closer it unites itself with its own free and better self, and thus partakes of the latter's transcendental divine nature.

Another point now arises for discussion. Seeing the great influence for good or ill that physical heredity and parental training must exercise upon the incarnated Ego, it will be well to enquire what power the latter possesses over these factors, and how it can be brought to bear on them. Some Theosophical writers have said that the Ego selects the family and circumstances best fitted for working out its Karma. No doubt this is true, but the method by which this is effected has not been much gone into. Speaking of certain dead and dying-out races, *The Secret Doctrine* says:—

"It is a most suggestive fact—to those concrete thinkers who demand a *physical* proof of Karma—that the lowest races of men are now rapidly dying out; a phenomenon largely due to an extraordinary sterility setting in among the women, from the time that they were first approached by the Europeans. A process of decimation is taking place all over the globe, among those races whose "time is up"—among just those stocks, be it remarked, which esoteric philosophy regards as the senile representations of lost archaic nations." "The tide-wave of incarnating Egos has rolled past them to harvest experience in more developed and less senile stocks; and their extinction is hence a Karmic necessity."*

This statement shows the negative aspect of the question, or the extinction of races through the absence of suitable Egos to incarnate therein, but we may now look at the positive side, and see whether the Ego can exercise a strong influence towards bringing about any particular incarnation or field for the exercise of its Karma. This brings us to a consideration of the metaphysics of love. Du Prel remarks:—

"Schopenhauer by deep penetration of this problem knew that love is metaphysical, *i.e.*, that its quality, intensity, and direction are determined by a metaphysical will, calling into existence the child to be expected from the connection of these particular parents."†

"Love being an instinct having its aim outside the lover, its problem is not to be explained from the consciousness. The particular direction of the passion lies in unconscious motives. Beauty, far from being the ultimate explanation, is only the conscious means to instinct for its unconscious aim. It is, however, quite another question whether marriage is contracted from love. Marriage is often decided by passion, but it is by no means always the case, especially in our time; so that Bahnsen was quite right in saying that there are two principal sorts of marriages, the physical and the metaphysical, those which spring from worldly motives, and those in which we are led by the Unconscious."‡

"But if birth is a free act of will, then already must the love of the

* *The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. II., p. 780.

† *Philosophy of Mysticism*, p. 206. ‡ *Ibid*, p. 210.

parents be identical with the impulse to incarnation of a transcendental being, and the parents can not be regarded as the producers, but only as the adoptive parents of their children, which explains at once the futility of all attempts to deal with the problem of life, as one of physical and chemical relations. It is difficult to justify marriage from the standpoint of pantheism, but from that of materialism, which regards love and marriage as only physical, it appears positively as a sin (of which opinion also Alexander Von Humboldt seems to have been); for parents have no right for their own satisfaction to bring into this existence a *new* being—a fraud upon it, if it has no metaphysical background. Only if love is identical with the transcendental act of will of the being pressing into existence, if marriages 'are made in Heaven' are they also justifiable."*

Taking these arguments into consideration, it will appear that the Ego can exercise a great and sometimes irresistible force to bring about the environment it requires on the physical plane, and although it is obvious that there are other potent factors to take into account, yet the Ego can by this means materially lessen the swaying or holding back of Karma. The principal cause of this, being "the failure of the Ego to acquire a body which will furnish the instrument or apparatus in and by which the meditation or thoughts of previous lives can have their effect and be ripened."†

We may now consider Karma as effects in connection with motives and acts, in cases, where either one or the other, but not both, are opposed to the law of harmony. Supposing, for instance, that I do an action which is bad in itself, but with a perfectly right motive; then the action being wrong, the effect will be also bad on me, the actor, but the motive being right the effect will also be good, and I must experience this also, hence it will sometimes happen that such dual results arising from a differentiated source of actions and motives will exactly balance each other, and the effects on the actor thus completely nullified. If, on the contrary, we assume the motive to be bad and the act good, then the reverse results to those before given will ensue, causes and effects being necessarily always similar to each other, and it will follow that ordinary human nature being a mixture of good and bad qualities, in varying proportions, produces mixed motives and acts, neither of them hardly ever quite pure or quite bad, hence mixed results. Speaking on this question of Karmic results arising from the differences between the actions and thoughts of ordinary men and occultists, *Light on the Path* says:—

"It is said that a little attention to occultism produces great Karmic results. That is because it is impossible to give any attention to occultism without making a definite choice between what are familiarly called good and evil. The first step in occultism brings the student to the tree of knowledge. He must pluck and eat; he must choose. No longer is he capable of the indecision of ignorance. He goes on, either on the good or on the evil path. And to step definitely and knowingly even but one step on either path produces great Karmic results. The mass of men walk waveringly, uncertain as to the goal they aim at, their standard of life

* *Ibid*, p. 226. † *Epitome of Theosophical Teaching*, p. 12.

is indefinite, consequently their Karma operates in a confused manner. But when once the threshold of knowledge is reached, the confusion begins to lessen, and consequently the Karmic results increase enormously, because all are acting in the same direction on all the different planes."*

Well, indeed, is it for most of us, that our bad acts have so little force behind them, although this also tells against us when we do good; for few of us can concentrate our entire energies in either direction, whilst the true occultist can, and hence reaps to the full the Karmic results of his potent acts. We may here enquire why it is that the majority of mankind constantly repeat acts, which they know must have bad effects upon themselves and others. I think that this refusal to learn from experience shows a terrible Karma, the effect of past misdoings, for it seems certain that an act, however bad, will be repeated again and again until the lesson is learnt. How many of us to-day are revolving in this vicious circle, refusing to advance in harmony with the great law of unity even one step. A sage has said, to do a wrong act once is an experience; twice, folly; three times a sin. Let us ponder this matter well. A great occultist was asked by a student, not very long ago:—

"Is it necessary that humanity should pass through so much misery as we now see around us, in order to obtain emancipation from the ills of conditioned existence," and the reply was, "if you had to undertake a journey, disagreeable but necessary, and encompassed by dangers, you would wisely pass through quickly; but the majority of mankind prefer to sit down in the mud." The freedom from the bonds of matter just mentioned, cannot be obtained by any of us, by producing good Karma. For if we constantly act from the motive, that by doing good to others, pleasant consequences will ensue to ourselves, we deliberately attach ourselves to the results of our actions, and although the consequences will be necessarily agreeable to us in this and future lives, yet the fetters being golden will be none the less fetters for that. It is against this subtle form of selfishness that Krishna so often warns Arjuna, speaking as the Higher Self to the lower, in the *Bhagavat Gita*, constantly telling the latter to be proof against pleasure and pain and all the other pairs of opposites, and to fight the battle of life, regardless of gain or loss, victory or defeat, keeping his mind fixed on the Supreme Spirit alone. Thus also it is said:—

"He who desires to be Karmaless must look to the air for a home; and after that to the ether. He who desires to form good Karma will meet with many confusions, and in the effort to sow rich seed for his own harvesting may plant a thousand weeds and among them the giant. Desire to sow no seed for your own harvesting; desire only to sow that seed the fruit of which shall feed the world. You are a part of the world, in giving it food you feed yourself. The soul must be unfettered, the

* *Light on the Path*, p. 37.

desires free. Learn now that there is no cure for desire, no cure for the love of reward, no cure for the misery of longing, save in the fixing of the sight and hearing upon that which is invisible and soundless. Begin even now to practise it, and so a thousand serpents will be kept from your path. Live in the eternal. Therefore you who desire to understand the law of Karma attempt first to free yourself from these laws, and this can only be done by fixing your attention on that which is unaffected by those laws."*

Therefore all our actions should be carried out from a sense of duty alone, and not with any idea of the consequences to ourselves, whether good or bad, if we wish to obtain emancipation from conditioned existence, fixing our thoughts on the Supreme Self, the unmanifested principle of all selves. This ethical teaching may seem too high and abstract for most of us, but it is the only path to freedom from rebirth in a physical world, and the sooner we begin to tread it the better for ourselves and others.

The problem of evil in humanity now claims some attention. According to Esoteric Philosophy, as we have seen, the differences between men are due to Karma operating to place Egos in just such physical circumstances, and with just such mental and moral characteristics as each has made for itself, therefore the existence in what we consider the most advanced nations, of those whom we call the criminal classes, shows that through some particular Karma, both national and individual, certain poorly developed entities—that is imperfectly developed in comparison with the general mass of the nation in which they are incarnated—appear therein. Accepting this view, the duty of any community towards these belated Egos is clear. Society whilst legitimately entitled to protect itself against their action, and narrow the sphere of their influence as much as possible, should attempt no punitive measures, and ought to use every endeavour to reform and bring them forward. In so far then as our present system of treating criminals is reformative, it is right, whilst so far as it is punitive it is wrong. For consider for a moment the actual position on both sides, when a community places a person in the dock for an offence against itself, we all know, although physical science has made too much of it, the enormous influence that early training and surroundings exercise on individuals for good or ill, therefore the first question that society should ask itself in such a case is, has everything possible been done to make it easy for everyone to do right and difficult to do wrong, as J. S. Mill somewhere says, for if not, then to just that extent society is itself responsible for the act of the criminal. Further, the existence of criminal classes in any community shows that the latter furnishes just the field required for the manifestation of such beings, and I should be unable to explain their existence in any nation which lived as a body, up to its highest capabilities. Shortly de-

* *Light on the Path*, p. 40.

fined, evil is the intrusion of the past into the present, the abnormal survival of past phases of human evolution, and the consequent predominance of certain principles which have had their day, and fulfilled their proper functions, but are therefore now out of adjustment with the general scheme of things. I do not wish it to be supposed that I hold, however, that great differences in human character, considered only from the moral standpoint, should not exist together at any period. For such a state of things is naturally unavoidable, but between this and the far too common existence of those who appear to be nothing but brutes in human form, there is a great gulf fixed. As humanity, according to occultism, having passed the lowest point of its great life cycle, is now returning up the arc towards pure Spirit, this factor should now show itself in humanity as superior to matter, or in other words, material civilisation ought now to give place to spiritual civilisation—I leave it to you to say what is the fact to-day.

I had intended this evening to devote some time to the important question of national Karma, but at this late hour it is obviously impossible to do more than just refer to it, and I will therefore offer a few remarks on it to conclude. In the case of nations and races, the inevitable reaction following on their departure from the law of unity in action can be plainly seen, because the field of the force exerted is so extended to our view. Taking the case of international war, we can always see the bad effects flowing therefrom; for instance, Europe to-day is weighed down with taxation and oppressed commercially through the existence of huge standing armies, all this being the outcome or Karma of international rivalry in the past. In the commercial world, the insane idea almost universally prevails that one nation can become richer by blocking up the channels of its trade with others by means of taxation, forgetting that each nation is but a part of a greater whole, and has special functions to perform for humanity at large, and which no other can perform for it so well, and that therefore the highest welfare of the whole human race depends upon each nation, as well as each individual, performing its own part or duty properly. This truth, as all others, applying on *every* plane of life, whether moral, mental, commercial or physical. It is taught that—

"Race-Karma influences each unit in the race through the law of distribution. National Karma operates on the members of the nation by the same law more concentrated. Family Karma governs only with a nation where families have been kept pure and distinct; for in any nation where there is a mixture of family—family Karma is in general distributed over a nation." *

Referring to the world's Karma, it is also said:—

"The Karma of this earth is the combination of the acts and thoughts

* *The Path*, March, 1893, "Aphorisms on Karma," p. 369.

of all beings of every grade which were concerned in the preceding Manvantara or evolutionary stream from which ours flows."*

For in exactly the same way as each Ego constructs his future abode, or mental and physical bodies, by his present and past thoughts and acts, so does humanity, considered as an entity, thus construct its future abode or planet, with all its characteristics, and has to incarnate and exhaust its self-produced Karma thereon. I now beg to thank you for the consideration and attention you have given to me this evening, and will conclude with a quotation from the *Light of Asia*.

Behold, I show you Truth, lower than Hell,
Higher than Heaven, outside the utmost stars,
Farther than Brahm doth dwell.

Before beginning and without an end,
As space eternal, and as surely sure,
Is fixed a power divine which moves to good—
Only its laws endure.

Such is the Law which moves to righteousness,
Which none at last can turn aside or stay;
The heart of it is Love, the end of it
Is Peace and Consummation sweet. Obey.

E. Adams, F.T.S.

* *Ibid*, p. 367.

THE

PYTHAGORIC SENTENCES OF DEMOPHILUS.

Translated by THOMAS TAYLOR.

REQUEST not of the divinity such things as when obtained you cannot preserve; for no gift of divinity can ever be taken away; and on this account he does not confer that which you are unable to retain.

Be vigilant in your intellectual part; for sleep about this has an affinity with real death.

Divinity sends evil to men, not as being influenced by anger, but for the sake of purification; for anger is foreign from divinity, since it arises from circumstances taking place contrary to the will: but nothing contrary to the will can happen to a god.

When you deliberate whether or not you shall injure another, you will previously suffer the evil yourself which you intended to commit: but neither must you expect any good from the evil; for the manners of everyone are correspondent to his life and actions; for every soul is a repository; that which is good, of things good, and that which is evil, of things depraved.

After long consultation, engage either in speaking or acting; for you have not the ability to recall either your discourses or deeds.

Divinity does not principally esteem the tongue, but the deeds of the wise; for a wise man, even when he is silent, honours divinity.

A loquacious and ignorant man, both in prayer and sacrifice, contaminates a divine nature: the wise man therefore is alone a priest, is alone the friend of divinity, and only knows how to pray.

The wise man being sent hither naked, should naked invoke him by whom he was sent; for he alone is heard by divinity who is not burthened with foreign concerns.

Gifts and victims confer no honour on the divinity, nor is he adorned with offerings suspended in temples; but a soul divinely inspired, solidly conjoins us with divinity; for it is necessary that like should approach to like.

It is more painful to be subservient to passions than to tyrants themselves.

It is better to converse more with yourself than with others.

Believe that you are furious and insane, in proportion as you are ignorant of yourself.

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AN HOUR IN BORDERLAND OCCULTISM.

Inasmuch as the Esoteric Philosophy stands rooted in Occultism, in the hidden aspects of man and nature, some study of those hidden aspects is necessary for any comprehension of that philosophy that aims at getting below its surface. Moreover, modern scientific and lay-scientific research is almost continually occupied with the problems of lesser Occultism. In the following paper I shall take up a series of points without too much regard to their sequential connection, under the headings of Hypnotism, Thought-Transference, and Mediumship.

Hypnotism.

A writer in Mr. Stead's paper, *Borderland*, over the pseudonym "X," explains to her readers that "we" (the nineteenth century omniscient scientist) have given up believing in the transference of an aura, odic light, or whatever one chooses to call it, from an operator in hypnotism to the patient, that we no longer regard it as true that anything is conveyed, and she remarks :—

"The old books contain pictures showing streams of light issuing from the person of the operator and directed towards the person of the sufferer. *Now* the operator has lost his importance ; he send out no streams and has no special gifts ; he is little more than a machine, and indeed machines have been invented which in many cases do his work perfectly well."

Some of this is mistaken. There *is* a communication of an auric influence, light, or fluid from operator to subject, and even from subject to operator. Men are contagious centres from the lowest of their planes to the highest.

On the physical plane the majority of diseases are contagious. On the next plane vitality is contagious, and the "superstition" that the very young and healthy should not sleep with the very aged and infirm is founded on a fact in Occultism. Further up, passions are communicable ; hate, *e.g.*, breeds hate, and love, love. Higher still thoughts are infectious, and yet higher, spiritual stimuli to good. The "magnetism" of Gladstones and Disraelis is to some a visible fact. The pictures of emanating auras to which Miss "X" refers are quite in accord with what may be seen by good clairvoyants. Inasmuch as when hypnotised the subject becomes passive, all those emanating influences from other men, which in the normal state we all receive, become in that state much more potent in moulding him. We have therefore to inquire (1) What is the state of a hypnotised man ? (2) How does the hypnotic state differ when produced respectively by a human operator and a crystal or revolving mirror ? (3) What is

self-hypnotism? (4) What are the communications from operator to subject?

What, then, is the state of a hypnotised man? What is the state of an anæsthetised man? In the anæsthetised man, the body of sensation, the astral body, is expelled from the physical body, which in itself has not sensation. The astral body of sensation, no longer *en rapport* with the physical body, and therefore no longer receptive of physical sensation, and containing the personal consciousness, is thus permitted to place itself once more into vibratory unison with the lower astral planes, whereon are various pictures, and wherein are various forms of life; that is, it begins in common parlance to dream vividly. Returning to the body, it does not retain as a rule the memory of such astral junketings, for it cannot bring them into any sort of relationship with the ordinary physical sensation-consciousness of daily life. Now the difficulty in the study of hypnotism is that so many states are included under one word. Thus one form of hypnotism does not differ from ordinary anæsthesia. The astral body, the medium between the personal consciousness and the body, the receiver and transmitter of ordinary sensation, is as in anæsthesia expelled, and the aforesaid astral junketings go on merrily. But in a somewhat different phase of it, the whole of the manifold astral body is not expelled. The higher layers of it, as it were, are expelled, those in more immediate relation with the personal consciousness; whilst those lower layers that are the immediate bearers of sensation, and that surround the nerve tubes as an aura, the nerve-aura, remain. These sometimes remain in anæsthesia, and for this reason the returning personal self reads in them some record of what has been done, and gets, as it were, the pain after it has occurred. But in yet another state of hypnotism a little more yet, as it were, of the astral garments of the Ego may be left behind in the body, those layers that are accustomed to receive the first impress of the will, say to move the leg, and which then have the duty of transmitting this to the next layer, the nerve-aura, and through these the nerves are reached. If then, in a given case of hypnotism, the Ego is driven off, leaving this layer behind, he has assuredly left behind him a false friend. For this layer will as soon take orders from anybody else as from the man to whom it properly belongs. Now suppose that in this particular hypnotic state, while the Ego is absent, a suggestion is made that the subject shall stand on his head. The transmitting layers have received their order, they have no judgment, no self-consciousness, and of course they do it. Or suppose that the suggestion is that four hours after waking the subject shall stand on his head. It is registered on the tablets of these layers in the same way as we ourselves register on our own tablets a determination to wake at seven to-morrow morning. The Ego returns, and does

not observe, as it were, that his house is occupied by a thief. Four hours pass, and the sheaths begin to make preparations like an alarum clock to go off at the hour for which they were set. In this the Ego takes part. We are not accustomed to find our bodies doing elaborate things for which we are not responsible; and so the Ego in our supposed case assumes necessarily responsibility for what his body is about to do, and half unconsciously invents for his own use a reason for that forthcoming action, and which, associating himself, as we all do, with his body, he feels the impulse to do. So he stands on his head, thinking it his own determination. Various morals lie hidden here.

We know that under ordinary circumstances we quite identify ourselves with our bodies, or rather with the consciousness and impulses of our bodies. We think that it is we ourselves who are hungry or tired, or aching; while this is the case we cannot rule that body or those desires, for we think that it is *we ourselves* who have them, and so we respect them too much to dominate them or outrage them by denying them gratification. We cannot rule our own very selves; the ruler cannot be identical with the ruled: so we cannot rule our bodies and our desires till we recognise that they are not ourselves. We saw that in some forms of hypnotism the ruler departs from the ruled; the Ego leaves the body, the home of the desires of the flesh and the personal self. Let us bear this in mind, and ask ourselves what else is Yoga, what else is meditation but this very leaving of the body. It may not be that the Ego betakes himself to another place in space, but his consciousness rises to an intensity and a purity that is quite out of relationship with the low, partly animal, and always unconcentrated consciousness of our ordinary embodied life. Suppose then that we wish to cure ourselves of a bad habit, we can make use of hypnotism, and while hypnotised get a suggestion to drop it, and then it will be gone. But it is unworthy, as a rule, of a student of Occultism, and detrimental to his progress, to get someone else to hypnotise him; he must be self-hypnotised. This cannot be done at once. We cannot all at once, without practice, learn to detach ourselves from the bodily consciousness. We must practise some form of what is technically called meditation, and learn during that half-hour to live only on the planes of the Self, off those of the body. Suppose that having in a degree learned to effect this detachment, we want to cure some bad habit, with this fixed thought we enter upon meditation, and having reached the point where we can quite clearly conceive that we are not the body, we turn back, as it were, and will for minutes upon that body that it shall no longer have those particular desires. If this be done every day for a few days it will become really difficult to commit that particular failing. For just as in the hypnotic state the lower principles are negative to the operator, so in the meditation state

the lower principles, nerve-auras, etc., can be made negative to the Ego, since he does not now identify himself with them, nor respect them so much. In a simpler way this can be done by anyone who will spend the last half-hour of each day in reviewing his acts and thoughts of that day, and *willing* that in future he will not again commit those faults. In a still less degree, any act of *willing*, even if only for an instant, not to do a particular thing or to do it is this very self-hypnotism, which is Yoga. Hypnotism is of course of great value where the patient has not so much power as this practice requires, where he would not be made to believe in his own power, and with negative, undeveloped, and will-less people generally. The objections are obvious, but in the hands of conscientious operators who would absolutely refuse to try any kind of experiment, who think only of the good of the patient, who are morally and physically clean men, it is certainly a practice of great value to humanity. Some of its supporters, however, constitute in the magnitude of their foolishness, almost a sufficient reason for its total abolition. A physician, *e.g.*, recently suggests that all persons shall be hypnotised in childhood, and the suggestion then made to them that they shall never feel pain. *Suppose this practicable*, it implies that pain is wholly an evil, whereas it is the chief teaching weapon in the hand of Karma.

Now there is a still further degree of hypnotism of which hitherto we have made no mention, though it is in line with the former ones. It occurs only when there is a powerful operator, distinctly evil in tendency, and of some progress, although in evil, along spiritual lines. In this case the Ego itself may be obliterated, not, of course, in essence, but so far as his total mentality is concerned; and for that time he is practically not existent, for there remain none of the threads that link him to any of the organs of mentality that rule the senses and collect therefrom their data for intellection and generalisation.

Now we can see something of the reply to two of our questions. We see in a measure what hypnotism is, and what are its degrees. And we see what self-hypnotism is. Its degrees are manifestly, roughly, three in number. There is that withdrawal from the body of all the principles down to and including the astral, and in doing this we shall not raise, or better, or alter our state of consciousness. There is the withdrawal from the body of the upper four principles, clothed in that form known as the thought-body or Mayavi-Rupa, and this, though it is usually attended by an elevation of consciousness, is not necessarily so. Lastly, there is the entirely spiritual meditation, in which we merge our thinking selves in the Higher Manas, a process wholly good and elevating. What is communicated from operator to patient? Many things, and it is the denial of these things that will ultimately land science and its votaries in the most helpless teaching and

practice of Black Magic. *On all planes* there is a communication, as real as the communication of small-pox by the breath on the lowest and physical plane. There is a communication, *or an absorption*, of astro-physiological vitality, of that pranic light that flashes and throbs perpetually throughout the aura of all of us. We shall call this the contagion of the *auric light*, an emanation that, passing across from the healthy operator, swathes in its folds the auric sheaths of the nerves of the weakly patient. There is the communication of any state of feeling, from the red Kamic up to the highest spiritual Buddhic. There is the communication of the auric *fluid*, the fluid of thought, from the fourth (Lower Manasic) plane, or if the operator be an Occultist from the fifth (Higher Manasic) plane of thought. These thought-emanations pass across in suggestion.

I have referred once or twice to clairvoyants, and the evidence accessible to those who are not pledged students of Occultism is largely founded on the concurrent testimony of clairvoyants. It is useless to speak to those who reject the fact of clairvoyance, for these are either ignorant of or inaccessible to evidence, and both become crimes the moment the sceptic open his mouth. It is a fact, that thought is communicable, especially pictured thought; that this is the more perfect the more negative the receiver makes his mind; that in the hypnotic state the receiving mind is at its maximum of blankness; it is therefore true that in the hypnotic state the thoughts of bystanders and of the operator tend very markedly to dominate the subject, and this, apart from the spoken word. This brings us to the last point, *viz.*, what is the difference in the hypnotic state produced by a man and by a crystal. The crystal in this case is the operator, and its aura tends to replace the nerve-auras of the subject; but its action seems in the case of the ordinary man to be of the lowest kind. That is, it is incapable of affecting the spheres of thought-aura, or mental aura, about the Ego, and consequently suggestions are not available to disturb the essential subjectivity of the subject. Different crystals and metals act in somewhat different ways.

Thought-Transference.

Our next point is really that of the actual objectivity of astral pictures.

We sit quiet and there floats across our mind the picture of a room we have never seen, or across our memory the picture of a room we are familiar with. Is this an objective actuality on the astral plane of matter, as much as *this* room is an actuality on the physical plane of matter? Is it true that it is a purely subjective hallucination, or is it real enough, and enough outside ourselves, to be magnified or turned upside down? Is there any meaning to the scientific phrase "pure hallucination?" We will take up these questions then: (1) What is the memory of scenes and persons and events; what is memory in general? (2) What are mental pictures, and

what is imagination. (3) What are the potencies of mind as a creator and fashioner? On the highest and most real planes of the Universe there is no distinction between subject and object, between seer and seen; all is one being. This, as a state of supra-consciousness not conceivable to us, we are justified in speaking of as the Unconscious. Lower down come in the intermediary creative gods, and these, reflecting on their one aspect the planes of non-differentiation of spirit and matter, of consciousness and substance, and feeling the flow through them of this One Life, Ideation-Substance, on their other aspect translate the Unit-Duad into the Ideation on the side of consciousness, and its clothing or matter on the side of substance. Then, descending the planes of being, they lose hold of the primordial ideation, and drowning themselves in the sea of substance, they become the earlier monads in evolution. These at last become men, and begin again to recover that power of creative Ideation which is now our birthright. In strictness, of course, the word creation is wrong, for all pre-exists in the highest synthetic One. Now memory is this creation; it is the taking-in of experience throughout life, and the placing it as a long gallery of pictures that each of us creates and owns in the astral light. The brain-cells are keys that open to us this or that chamber in our individual galleries. Some of these chambers are locked, for the brain-keys have rusted, till the hand of death unlocks all the chambers for us, full of old and long-forgotten deeds and events, hopes and fears. We must not materialise too much even the astral light, for it is of many grades, and not merely a pool of photographs. It registers not only pictures of this life, but the more tenuous pictures of times far back; it is the home of countless kinds of lives and of the evil reliquæ of men. It registers our subtlest intellections and prompts us to emotions good and bad. It pictures all the below, and from above it catches the fore-plan of the far-future from the Universal Consciousness, and from its tablets clairvoyants can thus catch glimpses of past and future. Substance is conscious on all its planes, and though that consciousness is very bald in physical matter, in astral matter it is brighter and more mobile, and on the planes of substance that are concerned with mentality and spirituality the consciousness of nature appeals to the Yogi as an all-present essence of thought.

If then two men sit, one passive and receptive to the thoughts of the other, who is active, and if thoughts, passing across from the latter, are felt and read by the former, we must ask, What *is* that influence which, radiating from one as a picture or feeling, finds a home in the mental sphere of the other? It is an actual objective thing; it is created or fashioned by will, and it is sent in a definite manner to a definite place. And there is evidence that to the trained student it is possible to place such a picture on paper without any other apparatus than the same effort

of will, forming there a fairly permanent impress. And this, done in that way physically, is done astrally by all of us every minute of our lives. Everything we do or think of, or that enters consciousness in any way, is at once by our (at present automatically acting) wills written into, pictured upon, the astral tablets of the earth. This is the unconscious memorising of them, and the power of conscious memory is the power to recall some of these and look at them again. So to that extent we are all clairvoyants. And the art of recalling our past lives is the art of recalling and re-looking at the pictures that we created about us in those lives, and left, when we died, locked in secure and difficultly accessible places in the astral light. Imagination is the same thing as memory almost; it is the grouping together in new combinations the old bits of memories, for we cannot imagine anything which in the raw material of its components has not happened to us. It is of use to some of us to recall past lives and relive some of their experiences, for we have not got out of them all that we might. There is no patent process, however, for doing it; it cannot be done in any useful fashion by mere casual impressions and bits of old astral pictures that may or may not belong to us. *We must first cultivate the memory of this life.* Every evening we must recall all the events and even the thoughts of the preceding day; and we must devote also some time to going back through the years, and noting all the events and deeds that have made us what we are. It is no waste of time, for as we re-drink the cup of the past we can note where we failed, where we sinned, where we gave way, and can take lessons for the future.

It is a living truth that no progress in Occultism is *possible* without the daily habit of doing this. Without it we can learn astral tricks, bits of parlour Occultism, but we do not enter upon that solemn reform and elevation of life that leads at last to a real life, with and in the spirit of the world. We can recall and kill the evil elementals that we threw out in passion, and thus undo some of the evil that we have contributed to the world's aura; we can gain thus strength to meet the old temptations that must ever come up again and again till they have been met and conquered, for Nature lets us off nothing, forgives nothing, fortunately for us. If, then, astral pictures or memory pictures are really outside ourselves and have a real existence, they ought to be affected by lenses, reflectors true and false, etc., etc., in the same way that ordinary scenery is, and this is the fact. A set of experiments in this direction are reported in *Borderland*. The clairvoyant who there reports gives the following facts as to *her* visions, and they demonstrate the fact as far as she is concerned.

1. Her astral visions when seen in a spoon are distorted as the reflection of one's face is distorted in a spoon; that is, pulled out sideways when the spoon is horizontal; lengthened when the spoon is held upright.

2. When the crystal in which the visions are seen is reflected in a mirror, the vision is reversed like ordinary reflections.

3. In a doubly refracting flake of Iceland spar, the picture was duplicated.

4. Magnifying glasses magnify the picture.

5. The pictures fatigue the retina and give rise to complementary colours in the same way that ordinary coloured pictures do. If you look at red and turn your eyes to white, you will see green, the complementary of red. So, in the experiment, an astral picture of a red colour produced an after image of green.

So these astral pictures answer to the ordinary tests of objective reality. If it be replied that they were probably due to the expectation of the experiments, then the reply is the sixth set of experiments. The experimenter went to Mr. Dixey, the optician, who allowed her to look at her visions through a number of lenses all producing different effects, she being ignorant of the nature of the lens in hand. She created astral visions by an effort of imagination and looked at them through the lenses. Five out of eight trials with different lenses gave the same results that would have occurred in the case of ordinary pictures, and three gave results not reconcilable with any theory. Moreover, the experiments demonstrated that after awhile the left eye became tired, and the pictures were only seen with the right. Those experiments of course make the phrase "subjective hallucination" entirely meaningless, and show that both memory and imagination are the creation of real ethereally substantive photographs, communicable, as other experiments show, from one to another.

Now perhaps it is a little clearer what the astral body is; for so far as its appearance goes, it is just a continuously existing photograph of the body. But it differs from a photograph in that it exists before the body is born, though modified by it after. The astral is formed before the physical and is the model upon which the physical is built. Its form is partly due to the requirements of the coming Ego that will inhabit it, partly to the moulding imagination of the parents, and partly to the hereditary impress of the astro-physical germ that starts its evolution into activity. This last factor is the only one recognised by science. The astral body is not ordinarily recognised by the physical sight, which is attuned in nearly all of us to physical things only. It is not very easy to say how astral visions are seen. Call up the picture of a room at a distance. The mental place in which you see in imagination that room is the place in which astral visions are seen. I think it is true that astral things and physical things are never seen by the eye at once. An adjustment is wanted. When an astral picture or form, say a ghost, is seen as equally and simultaneously objective with the furniture of the room, it is because that ghost for some

accidental reason has had enough physical particles temporarily built into his structure as to entitle him to take rank with the furniture. If you have a thickish section of tissue under the microscope you cannot with one adjustment of the lens see the surface cells *and* the deep ones; you have to alter it. And so you must alter your focus as it were from the physical adjustment to the astral, if you would be clairvoyant. Ghosts ordinarily do not hide the furniture. And now as a last point, let us make it clear to ourselves that the study of ghosts is not Occultism, not Magic, not even Psychical Research. Occultism in its highest sense does not deal with anything that is objective. It deals with the states of feeling in the Universe. It is an approach to, and a final union with the Universal Mind. And by Universal Mind I mean Universal Will, Impulse and Desire. Upon these things if we would be wise we have to trust the dicta of the Masters of Yoga, and from them we learn that there is throughout Nature, in all life, a desire or a will or an aspiration to be, to become, coupled with or anteceded by a clear knowledge of *what* it wills to be or to become. And we, when we aspire, share that divine desire; when not, then we shut ourselves off from it. So Occultism is that junction with the Universal that is aspiration for good, and in time it leads up to that place on which is written the forepicture of what will be, and that is Universal Wisdom, for there is nothing else to know. Such is Samadhi. But the lower nature clings heavily about us, and we are impatient. We still *want* this lower life and cannot aspire for long. Who then is the Occultist, and how shall we know him? In the beginning he vows to himself that there shall be no more meannesses and weaknesses in his nature, and that there shall be always in his aims the welfare of all other creatures. So he is kind, and neither by speech nor act wounds anyone. So he gives; of his money where that will do good; of his counsel, of his knowledge, where that will help, and where knowledge is longed for; of his peace, his comfort, and his wisdom, when he meets those who are sore with the wounds of fortune, of fate, and of the world; to these he tells of the truths of immortality, the way to win it, and of the sweet and mighty purpose of Nature for man, though her hand be iron-gloved. He is strong and unmoved in his utter peace and kindly radiation upon all; in him there is no change of mood, no irritability from hour to hour and from day to day. To be with him strengthens and calms, and encourages. Every moment is an aspiration with him; behind the strong current of his thoughts and deeds is a steadfast still sound, coming from his heart, a sound that is his will, his conscience, his hope, his peace, his unfailing guide, and though his thoughts come and go, the sound is always. He is self-controlled, cares little for possessions and nothing for the comfort of his body, and his carelessness for possessions and comforts saves him from anxiety and disappointment.

In his mind is always his ideal of what he would become, and every instant he adjusts himself to that. He keeps his consciousness always at its clearest and highest point. His thoughts are universal, of the welfare of men, of the evolving and completing purpose of Nature. Daily he meditates, and then withdrawing all attention from external things he seeks union with the soul of Nature, yearning greatly for it, thinking of himself as spread in space, as present in all men and animals and things, as embodied and non-embodied love and charity, as one with the Higher Man whose voice he constantly feels in his heart, as the Universal Divinity. Nightly he reviews the day and marks where he failed to realise his ideal, where trifling thoughts and hindering thoughts and wishes wasted the precious time of life. In his study he examines man and Nature and their relations plane for plane, so that his spiritual advance may be hand in hand with the growth of his intellect, and that he may be every way rounded and perfect. Along all these lines he works, and then his powers begin to expand. He begins to touch the thoughts of men and feel what has not reached their lips, feel the coming and contents of letters they are writing him, the feelings they have for him, and the evil and good in their natures. He gets prognostications of coming events, shaping thereby the lines of his work, and that voice in the heart which to us is only conscience, becomes for him intuition and an intelligible teacher of the secrets of past and future. As his sympathy for men widens he reads more and more plainly their characters, and that occasional intuition of their thoughts and feelings which we all have, did we but study and recognise it, becomes for him a growing light into the inner selves of others whereby he learns the wisdom of humanity for himself, and for them the power of saying to them and doing for them that which shall most aid their growth, as he moves amongst them like a benediction. He sees the psychic colour of his age and country and city; the slowly gathering astral storms that come down to us at last as wars, murder-epidemics, and disasters to life on land and sea. He learns to stand alone, thinking his own thoughts, disentangling from his mind those other countless thoughts and feelings that are not his own, coming upon him as upon all of us from the waves of other men, dead and living; waves which we in our ignorance take as our own. He studies the lives that have other home than land and sea, lives that after countless years will live as men, and that even now take colour, evil and good, from thought of man. So he lives on, wearing down many bodies, his mind standing on ever higher and higher places of thought, having its continuance above the gulfs (for other men) of birth and death, gulfs which for him are now bridged by the unbroken thread of memory and foreview. For he stands in the wings of the stage and watches unmoved in his thought the changing scenes of life, the uplifting and downletting of the

curtain. Lastly the Lodge of Masters and Teachers of all times and peoples open for him its mighty doors; he reaches the place and companionship of all the great ones who have gone before and now stand watching and helping with strong hands the woes and struggles of our poor humanity.

By such a career, none of us need be appalled; none need stand back saying, "This is not for me," "This is too great a Path." Nothing but has its beginning, and that beginning is when any of us suppress an angry word, or root out a sensual habit, or nourish one growing aspiration for the light. Let none of us have too much humility. The goal may be far off, but to him who fights even a little, the uttermost victory is certain. Life gives place to life, and the hardly-established habit of to-day is the innate instinct of to-morrow. Much, very much, of our future depends on what we do now. It is a cyclic turning-point in human history, the latter end of this nineteenth century, a meeting-place of diverse Karmic forces. If we lend our aid now to Nature, struggling between spirituality and materiality, at the bottom of her arc, we shall reap good fruit, the good fruit of birth, when again the fires of Occultism are burning brightly, when once again humanity has moved into an auspicious cycle, having earned Nature's gratitude. If not, if we stand back, if we let those in the front of the fight stand alone against the spirits of matter, many births may chance to go by before we happen again upon a cycle where the beginnings of real growth are to be made as now they can be. To begin work now is to make our personal cycle of future births attuned to the spiritual cycle in nature; ignorance is no crime, but to fail now, knowing the right, is no light thing; it sows a seed pregnant with future evil; it is to miss the protection of the wings of auspicious time, to face the perilous chances for the growth of evil in us of a long chain of casual births throughout the centuries, births wherein growth and progress if they come at all, do so against far greater odds than now. Some among Theosophists say where is work to do. Work comes to the man who can do it, and they who truly have no work are fit for none. They must do a work upon themselves before Karma entrusts them with some for others. To study, to think, to destroy the personal evils of uncharity, luxurious tendency, idleness, to aspire always for more of the waves of spiritual impulse that come sometimes like a warm-scented wind upon us all, these all can do in making ready to be to others the teachers of whatever good is in us. Then we shall find our work at hand. And if no pupil comes, still we have worked with Nature. We have slain some evil, done something to fill the waves of thought about our heads with good. We need not wait to be taught anything. We can spurn utterly the false humility that would have us to be grovelling worms, for they who became Christ and Plato and

Buddha were once as we. The problems that we have to solve in life are the same for no two, each has his path, his fate, his difficulties, but all the paths converge, and the diversely perfected souls of the far future will form each one facet of the cosmic jewel. In the light of our ideals, in the light of our several pictures of that golden future, we can all move hopefully and confidently through the Karmic tasks of daily life.

Mediumship.

In using the term medium it is easy enough to see that we are using a word which has many meanings, for there must be as many kinds of mediums as there are kinds of influences to be conveyed. In the narrow terminology of Occultism a medium is a human organisation through which the forces on the unmanifested side of Nature becomes obvious on the manifested side. We go to a spiritualistic séance and we see the lightly touched or untouched table move; we hear noises, see lights, smell perfumes, hear bangs, musical notes, whole melodies, voices; we see the furniture move, small nicknacks about the room arrange themselves into shapes, circles, crosses, etc.; pencils write on slates, writing appears on paper without visible agency, the piano is played, the medium is lifted off his chair, all kinds of things are brought from different places or precipitated out of the astral light; forms appear, the forms of those dead and not dead, bits of forms, hands and heads, and of these forms some speak in the accents that belonged to them when living. For all or any of these things to occur, there must be present a human organisation called a medium; the manifestations of all kinds *do not depend on his will*, but he must be present. They are weak if he is conscious, strong if he is unconscious; in proportion as they are strong is he afterwards exhausted, and some of them ruin his health. We have therefore to ascertain (1) what is the organisation necessary to constitute a man a medium; (2) what are the forces that act through him. It is manifest that his consciousness changes. He may be conscious wholly on this plane in the ordinary way. He may be half conscious on this plane, and half on another, the astral plane, seeing a few things there with some effort. He may be wholly unconscious on this plane, and wholly conscious on the lower astrals. In that case he will remember nothing on waking, and while asleep may either speak or not. If forms are appearing and physical manifestations are going on he will not speak. If he speaks it may either be in his own manner or a totally different one. He may speak platitudes, which is the most usual case; he may say things that will be known to someone present; he may read pictures from the mind of anyone present, moving someone to tears by telling them that he sees the spirit-forms of their dead relatives "hovering o'er them." He may see denizens of the astral world, the little lives who live in

its blue waves, and describe them in the language of nursery biology, or he may dignify them as spirits from the eternal worlds. He may see and describe things going on at any distance in space, may read closed books and letters and comport himself in similar interesting ways, all the time speaking in his own voice and manner or quite otherwise. And if otherwise he may have the voice and manner belonging to some marked personality who may be or have been a real personality or not. On higher astral planes he may hear music of great splendour, see noble pictures and describe them, meet still higher astral denizens, read the mental thoughts as well as see pictures in the minds of those present, thoughts buried and forgotten, or present and recent, known to their possessors and unknown and getting into high astro-mental currents he may make orations of no mean kind, purporting to come from any dead personality of any mental rank. He may say things that are true of history or of personalities and events known to no one present, and he may predict the future. *None of any of these things are done by his own volition and none are remembered afterwards.* In that he differs from the genius, and from the student of Occultism, who in the former case voluntarily places himself on high astral planes where are the music and scenery and poetic feeling he wants and who, remembering, expresses them in noble harmonies, pictures and poems to the benefit of humanity; and, in the latter case, intentionally reads the past and future for his own instruction. Or, far more rarely, he may rise to the actual plane whereon are resting the Egos of the dead, the glorified Devachanees, and though he cannot break into the sacred peace of their consciousness, he may catch their colour and the aura of their thought, bringing to those to whom he speaks what *seem* actual messages. If yet higher, if of abnormal purity and speaking amongst an abnormally high-souled circle, he may be used by a real Master as a vehicle of communication, just as on the lowest plane he may be used by a spook; by a decaying Kamic Rupa of some dead Ego planes above, in Devachan; by a fully alive and conscious suicide or victim of sudden death by accident or judicial murder; by any Ego recently dead who has some reason for wanting to communicate something; or by some being on the evil side of Nature. The keynotes then of a medium are *passivity* and abeyance of will, and the *forgetfulness* of what he has done while entranced, after waking.

The voluminous literatures of spiritualism afford evidence in any quantity of the foregoing phenomena, and "spirit-orations" resembling tea in last night's teapot. We want to study more the medium himself than what he says, more the "intelligences" acting through him than what they say and do. The medium then is essentially passive; he has foregone his human self-conscious volition; his state is the antithesis of meditation, the antithesis of the mighty strain wherewith a genius or a

Yogi tear their way to the upper planes of being and consciousness, returning thence with full memory and power of expression. The genius and the Yogi differ in that the latter, the Yogi, has a chart of the way; the genius aims blindly, and though he uses every effort to ascend, he does not know the exact path nor its steps, he cannot transcend a certain point, he, in the main, limits his spiritual acquisitions to what he can express, and he does not, like the Yogi, conform the whole of his life to this one thing. Though the genius and the Yogi are the same thing, the difference is very great. Let us try and imagine this path of ascending states of consciousness. We look at the room, perhaps feel hungry, and we think of these things in our ordinary casual way. Let us call that the physical consciousness. Now close your eyes, and call up any chance pictures that your imagination suggests to you, say, a forest with its trees, a little lake, the singing of birds, the dew of evening, the lap of the waters upon the shore, the breeze gently stirring the trees, the scents of early buds. Concentrate on this so intently as to forget all else, and at last actually think yourself in that forest, meet people in it and have adventures with them, talk with them, quarrel with them, fall in love with them. When this has become perfectly real to you, your physical consciousness will vanish; you will be asleep or in a trance.

What is now your consciousness? It is astral; this is the second plane of consciousness, the astral plane. Now pass beyond all these planes where there are pictures to be seen. Listen to a piece of the highest music, and listen with such concentration that there is nothing else but that in your consciousness; no pictures, no thoughts, nothing but the state of high and splendid consciousness that the music arouses. There is no way to describe this, it has no relation to words or to people or to anything. It is absolute spirituality, and we will call it the spiritual state. If you have done this in perfection, you have got to a state in which there is no subject or object, no matter and no Ego, for in the throb of that supreme consciousness you have just that and have forgotten that you are a self. It is the place in the Universe in which matter and self have not yet separated. I am of course supposing that it is a state induced perfectly, as only a Yogi of many lives of training could do. He has dissolved in that state the world and men and himself. The Yogi does not reach this state by listening to music, but by a prolonged effort of will to get up higher; and if he did, he would soon reach the state in which the actual music was forgotten, its sequences and cadences, and nothing but the spirit of it remained, the yet higher glory of the consciousness. See what state he is in. He is neither this nor that man, he has lost his limits; there is neither space nor time, but a *state*—not a state of a man, for wherever the body may be lying the man has dissolved himself; there is no here or there, no this

moment and that; he has reached the plane of the universal timeless and spaceless Spirit, changeless, that which is and has been and will be, the universal comforter for which saints and mystics of every age have sighed. If you object and say that it is God they have sighed for, I reply that what they really want and get is the state of consciousness that the thought of the glory of God tends to produce. You can ultimately reach this state by any road that raises consciousness, but in the end all roads converge and lead to this sacred place or state. It is Nirvana. The trained swimmer can cast away his belt and supports, and the trained Yogi needs at last no conceptions to help him up, only the will to get up. It is useless to multiply words about this; taken from below, it is the state where man loses himself in Absolute Spirit; taken from above, it is the state where Spirit has not yet become man and matter. At the beginning of the way up you are a man looking at matter and the world; then you become a man looking at nothing, but feeling; then you become the feeling only, having dissolved yourself out into the Eternal Spirit. Taking it from above downward, the Eternal Spirit becomes beings who feel only, who neither think nor know, and these we call elementals of various grades; finally they begin to feel on lower and lower planes, and to see, know, and think, and then they are men. On its other aspect the Eternal Spirit becomes matter, the thing seen, known, and thought about by men. Or, to trace matter downward, we get first the spirit of music, then music, melody and harmony, then astral form, and finally matter. We now see why music is one of the best paths upward, why the Hindoos said that sound was the Spirit itself, and how sound lies behind form and matter. The sound-pictures of sand on drum-heads are a cosmic fact. That which appeals to our consciousness as sound and music is the very force in Nature which fashions all forms, arranges all matter, astral and physical, and out of it comes human consciousness, just as in meditation human consciousness returns to it. I am forced to pass quickly through a very difficult subject, but it was necessary as a preliminary to explain some of the many difficulties in mediumship, for in human consciousness, in those parts of it not yet recognized, not made *self*-conscious, and in the inner sheaths in which that unknown consciousness is located, lie folded up the phenomenal powers over matter used by the Yogi and the medium. To take it another way. Take a knife and gash the skin. It gapes widely, for the cells of the skin on either side the cut pull the sides apart. Now, observe a cut in a man who has died of accident; that is, driven out of the body, astral and all. You will find after a little while that your gash does not gape so much, and ultimately not at all. With the departure of the astral body, the enormous force of cohesion of the cells does not exist; and it is enormous, almost immeasurable if you recollect that there are millions of cells. Again, ad-

minister an anæsthetic; the upper layers of the astral body are driven out with the Ego, but the physical layers of it remain. These hold the force necessary to keep the heart going; an enormous store of force this also, and to maintain the cohesion of the cells. Give more of the anæsthetic, drive out most of the physical remains of the astral body, and you drive out therewith that part of the astral organisation which holds the force that keeps the heart going, and the man dies, or you can drive out part, and simply lower the heart. Where is it gone? There are areas of force in us that we have not yet learned to use; we cannot control our hearts, nor the elasticity of our cells. In other words, there is a huge mass of force stored in the astral bodies which we cannot yet use. We can only understand and use a little of it, enough to move the limbs, much the least part of it. After death, when the astral body floats about at its own sweet or not sweet will, it discharges itself slowly, like a charged electric conductor, and is harmless; or it discharges itself quickly, and makes bangs and unpleasant noises, as spooks do sometimes at séances where they are wanted to, and elsewhere where they are not wanted to, as you may remember from D'Assier's *Study of Phantoms*, and ghost stories in general. But in records of séances, you will read of feats that the strength of a man is inadequate to effect.

So far as I understand the matter, the astral body is like the physical body, a non-uniform thing. The latter is composed of those little parts that we call cells, each a distinct life. The former, the astral body, is composed of similar little astral lives, called physical elementals. They are not conscious as we reckon consciousness; that is, though they have a bald sort of consciousness like a plant, a sensation-consciousness of a crude kind, they have no Ego or mind, and are therefore not self-conscious. They are force carriers. I believe that an electric current consists of a stream of these; that a charged electric conductor is a metal whose aura is charged intensely with enormous numbers of them; that a magnet is also a metal having an aura arranged in oval lines, along which they circulate continuously in arcs; that that are many groups of them with many sub-groups, the lowest corresponding with and having its home in the auras of minerals, the next in that of plants, and that all in a modified form comprise the astral or vital body of man; that is, that modified by the aura of man they cohere as round and in a magnet, and constitute by that modified motion his vitality and physical force; that they are liberated in small numbers by every act of will; that in the physical phenomena of mediumship they are liberated irregularly in largish quantities to a distance from the body, and cause the irregular phenomena; and that after death, the principle of cohesion having departed, they dissipate as the astral spook, either slowly and normally, or quickly as at séances, and re-

inforce in that way the phenomena due to the medium. Other physical phenomena are due to the putting forth by the medium of an astral limb, coherent and composed of these lives. Save in the case of an Occultist they are not much under the control of the will. Why they are under, apparently, the control of a medium who has less will than the normal man who cannot control them is our next point. But bear in mind that the medium is exhausted in proportion to the success of the phenomena. We know that at death when the real man is departing from the body the brain is stimulated by what one may call, in electrical parlance, the breaking current of death, and every cell, roused into an abnormal activity, wakes up the astral pictures connected with it, and every fact, deed, and memory of his life stands in that solemn moment before the mental eye of the departing self. Something like this occurs in the trance of mediumship, which differs only in degree from death itself. It differs in that the Ego's consciousness is very dim and uncertain, and, as it were, separated from its memories, which are to some degree objective to him. The process is a wholly abnormal one, and the astral vitality differs in condition from that which obtains at death. That of it which should be engaged in maintaining in activity the physical basis of consciousness is set free, and produces physica phenomena of various magnitudes. Such physical phenomena are not controlled by the will of the Ego, who is, in his entranced condition, paying no attention to them. They may be reinforced by the additional presence of casual spooks. When they give evidence of intelligence there may be a multitude of causes for that, which we shall attempt to examine. But the significant factor is a large amount of force, residing in an astral body, and now liberated from the control of an Ego, prepared to manifest itself. That astral body, though, in consequence of the trance of the Ego, it may be regarded as an untenanted house, is yet a furnished house. It is charged with the whole life-history of the late Ego, it is in relation with his aura. Note, therefore, that when it gives up its force, it may give it up in producing phenomena, such as raps, that may express some of the facts which as potential memories lie in that astral body, memories of the Ego's doings and happenings at any distance of time back in his life. They are not memories, for they are not illuminated by the otherwise-occupied consciousness of the Ego, they are not intelligent, but they are the astral basis of intelligence, of memory; and the emanating force is, so to speak, emanated after a pattern, out of a mould, and it may therefore, apparently intelligently, really automatically, rap out scraps of thought, tag-ends of memories, all in fair sequence, that come from the hidden furniture, perhaps long disused, in the house of the Ego. Similarly, an emanation may be contributed by any of the circle who may thus disgorge their dead memories; and lastly, the said emana-

tions may be guided to their utterance by the consciously or unconsciously acting wills of any members of the circle. In thought-reading experiments it often happens that the thought read is not that now consciously present to the operator, but one which he has totally or partially forgotten. We have next to consider the fact that some of these latent memories in the minds or rather astral records of the circle may be more or less vivid pictures of their own dead relatives, of their tricks and favourite phrases. These, when automatically repeated by the active astral forces, may produce an almost overpowering impression of the actual presence of such dead relative. In the same way, a vivid picture, say of Shakespeare, formed in youth in the medium's mind, coupled with an acquaintance with his writings, may produce an equal impression of the presence of Shakespeare, who may explain that he is happy in heaven if the medium is a Christian. Further, if the astral of the medium comes out of him wholly, as it sometimes does, and gets enough matter into itself from the auras of the circle to become visible, it may take actual mould into the form of the dead relative or of Shakespeare, seeming to the excited and hypnotised circle sometimes to speak, thus making the illusion quite perfect.

Now above the astral body comes the Kamic body, and this in an account of mediumship has next to be dealt with. The Ego who enters the state called Devachan has for that time of Devachanic stay no desire of physical sensation. But during life he had many such desires, and the astral atoms which had taken from him the colour of such desires cohere after his death into an astral form, not the astral with which we have hitherto dealt; the Kama Rupa. After a time they disintegrate and go their strange ways in Nature, but till they do so they frequent many séances. And they are more dangerous than the class we have just dealt with. They are invisible to the ordinary clairvoyant. They do not, as the others do, suggest mental pictures, but they arouse in those who contact them, evil desires. They resemble in their effect the association with decidedly depraved persons. Every astral atom in association during life with us has a little gleam of consciousness. They are our children and will take what education we give them. We can colour that consciousness how we like. Act badly, that is feel and think badly, and they learn to try and repeat that feeling, as monkeys imitate. That is the formation of habit, for what we train these little beings to do they go on doing. We can put what we like into them; their little consciousnesses are in immediate relationship with our lord-consciousness, our minds. They learn readily, and go on repeating whatever we teach them. They become our evil Karma and destiny and urge us to our doom. And they return in future lives. We cannot purify ourselves thoroughly till we have wiped their faces, for we have made them dirty. You cannot at once use a herring-

barrel, as H.P.B. said, to keep attar of roses in. There is nothing much in a paper on mediumship then to say of these following relics that we kick temporarily off from ourselves when we betake ourselves to Devachan, except that unless the medium and circle are of exceptional purity, they will have their worse desires intensified by the necessary presence of the larvæ, succubi, and incubi now known as the Kama Rupas.

Leaving these we will pass to the highest of the astral bodies, to that very sublimated sheath of astral substance that is in immediate relationship to the mind, the Lower Manas. It is no more uniform than are the physical, the astral proper, or the Kamic bodies, but is composed like these others of lives or elementals. They are on the plane of our thoughts; are, as it were, each the body and outward form of a thought, are set in motion by every movement of our minds, and may take lodge with others who feel and see our thoughts. Apart from this, it is capable of becoming the vehicle for the whole body of our consciousness. It is this which appears sometimes at the death of a man, announcing that death to a friend, and waking up in him the full picture of the scenic accessories of the death. It is the body of the consciousness of the Yogi, who therein, and not properly in his physical body, can transcend the common planes of consciousness. Our mere thought of another place will sometimes send enough of it thither to make it appear to beholders as a phantom of ourselves. Now inasmuch as it is the body of meditation for the Yogi, it is the body of trance of the medium *sometimes;* and a medium is a pale travesty of a Yogi. A Yogi moves upward in regular gradation from plane to plane of consciousness, keeping always fixedly in his self-consciousness; he does not move from anywhere till he has made a landmark there for his self-consciousness. Imagine a savage in a crowded street, dropped there suddenly; he would, as we say, lose his head, lose his cool reason, lose his clear grip of the situation with himself therein. Let that stand for a picture of a medium who has drifted suddenly from the physical on to another plane of consciousness. Now imagine our savage trained slowly to bear the street, trained in villages, in towns, lastly in respectable suburbs first on Sunday during church-time and then on Saturday. In that way he would be able to stand the street, however crowded. In the first state he would remember nothing of it save a hideous din. In the second he would quietly observe and remember it all. Let that last be the picture of the Yogi. For the new planes of consciousness one may reach in meditation are as confusing as the crowded street. So the Yogi trains himself by regular degrees, trains his observation, trains his faculties and memory for every plane, and is confused nowhere. So however high he gets he remembers it all at last on coming to the common ground again. At last he learns even in sleep to preserve an unbroken consciousness throughout

the night. Let us call the planes of consciousness four in number: the ordinary physical, the astral, the Devachanic, the purely spiritual. Each are of many grades. From the ordinary physical state of consciousness, the medium is apt to drift to the astral. The words of the book he is reading get blurred, his eyes lose their near accommodation, he falls out of consciousness of the room he is in, into a brown study. Faces present themselves to him; he seems to himself to be seeing and talking with non-existent people; to be engaged in other doings; he is half-dreaming, building castles in the air, drifting from one topic and one set of memories and events to another. He is half on an astral plane. Then he comes suddenly to himself with a start, "Where am I? oh, here!" That is an elementary excursion on to the astral, and during that time the various physical phenomena we spoke of before may happen. And as he wakes, the memory of what he has just been seeing slips from him like a dream, and nothing but a few blurred impressions remain. But if as a Yogi he had accustomed himself all day long to register on his brain every chance astral picture that floated along, if, sitting in meditation, he had sternly trained himself to suppress sight and thought of the room he was in, to catch in full self-consciousness the astral visions, holding them with an unshakable will till he noted whether or not they were worth anything, retaining or dismissing them at will, and calling up only when he willed at last; then the case is very different, a full memory would be obtained. And he carries the same process up on to the upper planes.

The next state of consciousness we examine is the Devachanic. Devachan is the home of the dead, a semi-divine rest in the bosom of mother-nature. It is beyond the ordinary astral planes. As the medium, and he must be a pure one to get here, drifts up on to this, the astral visions cease to be chance ones, they cease to be meaningless, cease to be disturbing, cease to be irrelevant. Devachanic visions rest on that which is pure in consciousness; they are the events of the past life without the pain and evil. All that is best in the mind, all that is pure, all that is elevated, all that has to do with the love of family, of nation, of mankind, all that has to do with philosophy, with insight into the principles of Nature, with art and with music, all these alone are in the mind, and the body and its passions are left far below. So the imagination, thus pure and thus elevated, creates its world from the materials of the memory of the past life, and in the glorified life *now* lived there is no pain, no baseness, no blurred outlines. That is Devachan, and in it the self of the man has what it will. If its life was disturbed and unhappy and unloved, now it has that peace, that bliss, and that love which on earth were vainly longed for; for now the longing suffices to create them. If in life that self had longed for the treasures and happinesses of music and art which poverty

denied, now again the longing creates them. If the self yearned in life for time to think out the secrets of the Universe, and time was denied, now time is propitious, and according to the capacity of the thinker the truth is revealed to his unclouded vision, truth not wholly forgotten or easily recovered when birth comes again. Such is Devachan, and to this we have supposed our medium to ascend. But if the astral visions are forgotten, how much more these? And again the Yogi, reaching this plane by no easily gliding trance, bnt by stern effort at self-control, and registering every inch of the way, forgets nothing, but for his own development and of his own will, seeks Devachan as a stage in his growth, a temporary foothold in his meditation.

Now, lastly, the spiritual planes, culminating in Nirvana. The illusions of Devachan have faded out, but the light of consciousness burns with unceasing intensity. Whatever conciousness is created in us by the noblest expressions of music, whatever consciousness is developed in the saint in the supreme ecstasy of his contemplation, whatever idea we can form of the consciousness of a Buddha lost in his love and pity for mankind, these consciousnesses, carried to so far a point that selfhood is lost in their intensity, dissolved into the sense of universal presence in space and time, and in all lives, and of unity with the aspiration and purpose of Nature, these constitute the spiritual consciousness.

Take once more the three planets, astral, Devachanic, and spiritual. All of us have our current in space. The unevolved elemental life of Nature enters into us on all the planes, and imprinted with our seal and superscription passes out again into astral nature. We receive the raw metal of life, and send it forth stamped and coined from the mint of our minds. Astral space is peopled with our emanations, our thoughts high and low, our desires good and bad, with every breath we drink the thoughts, ideations, and desires of others. Then, concentrating on some receptive organism, they find outlet in act, if with us they have not got so far, and the Whitechapel murderers often but do the murdering for the community, having by the evil of their own nature, and by their negativity, made themselves the meeting-place of all the evil currents of that community. What wonder then that the medium, throwing his mental receiving apparatus to float passively upon the whirlpool and also cesspool of the astral light, becomes the vehicle and mouthpiece of any current to which his mental condition and habits relate him. So in his trance he may speak of scenes now going on almost anywhere in the world, with and without relevancy to the circle; he may come *en rapport* with the astral reliquiæ of the dead, near and far, speaking things that pertain to the past; he may enter the currents of any of the circle and speak their inner secrets and forgotten past; speaking also all

these things more or less coloured with his own personality and bias, just as Swedenborg fitted his visions into Christian verbiage and formulas; whilst on a lower plane the physical phenomena, lights, sounds, and movements of the séance room may be transacting themselves; whilst indeed his automatic physical hand, guided by his and other astrals, may be writing and drawing similar matters and pictures; or the physical hand being still, the astral hand may be doing the same things. Mounting yet higher through the astral levels he may discern yet higher things; hear music, read the long past and foreread the future, coming into touch with those subjective forces that are yet moulding the future, as one predicts that in an hour the clock-hand will be an inch further on the dial. Even when his consciousness is on its normal physical level and occupied with its surroundings, his hand, guided by the astral automaton, passively receptive, within him, may write that of which he knows nothing. Ascending yet higher, he may place himself in direct touch with the Egos in their Devachanic rest, and make himself a medium between them and their survivors on earth, translating into astral messages the currents of love that continue for those they loved on earth. For Devachan is real enough, and those therein, though they are mercifully excluded from real knowledge of the present condition of those on earth, yet do actually help them and communicate with them on the planes of *feeling*, just as on earth a man communicates to a friend of whom he is thinking affectionately the help and warmth and *feeling* of his love, though neither know of the other's whereabouts, doings, or thoughts. For feeling, emotion, love, hate, carry further and more easily than thought, and to these neither death nor space are any bar. And love, too, carries further than hate, for it is the recognition of the *fact* of unity, and hate is insistence upon the *illusion* of separateness, Lastly, our medium, if of very great purity, may perhaps reach the planes of Spirit, touch the border of the consciousness of a Master, and in some rare instances they seem to have delivered such high influence as that. But all these latter degrees of mediumship are very rare, and the ordinary records of trance orations are great cataracts of unvarnished platitude.

So we come to the end of our study of mediumship, and, facing the medium, ask him what good he is to mankind. The indictment is that he cultivates passivity as a virtue, whereas Nature enjoins activity. Neither his moral character nor his will grow by his doings. He is a psychic and spiritual opium-eater at best, and at worst he is a cesspool of spooks. As a rule he is rotten with vanity, and disdains the hard study of Occultism and the strenuous practice of meditation that sterner students undertake. In strict truth he is unpicking every stitch of work that Nature has done upon him. He is not a genius, not a Yogi, not an Occultist, but the

opposite of all of these. And if the medium cannot benefit mankind, what shall we maintain of the Occultist? The Eternal Spirit of the Universe is in all of us knowing itself not; the light shineth in darkness and the darkness comprehendeth it not; it descends out of its unity upon the first step of the seven rungs of the ladder of being; it breaks into lives, Gods of creation, and across the eyes of each of these is drawn a veil, the veil of a garment consubstantial with its plane, letting through only the light of that plane, a living register of its life and experience thereon. And in a while, each of these steps down upon the level below, and gathers about himself, though he knows himself not, another garment, another register of other experience, another vehicle of creative action. And though each on this downward path knows not himself, and wrapped in his thickening veils knows not the glory of the light and life that is in and out of him, that is his very Self, yet in his works he does unknowingly the formations and creations that are demanded of him by the inner light, whose law he feels and yet does unknowingly. And then other steps and other veils, and at last at the seventh he is buried in the still life of inanimate nature, having unknowingly weaved about him the latent knowledge and possibilities of all those descending levels. Now through eons of further and now expanding life in herb and brute he has reached humanity, and in him is now dawning the knowledge of self, self-consciousness, that "I" which in its fullness is the Supreme Life. About each of us are yet those seven veils, dark, unfolded, unused, veils that can be and will be wings, keys to unlock each a portal of Nature. We let them lie, perhaps, like the wings of a chrysalis, wings that when opened, shaken free in the sunlight, will carry us plane beyond plane again to the highest. And in that flight upward we illumine the fields of being with our *self*-consciousness. Descending we knew not ourselves; the waves of the One Life, which is also Law, flowed through and through us, yet it became not wisdom nor knowledge, for wisdom is the beholding of Life and Law with the eye of Self, and Self we then knew not. Now, going up, we can begin to say, *I* know, and therefore *I* remember, for those garments, bodies, corresponding, each with its plane, register all the possibilities and manners of life, each of its plane. So to lose hold of our self-hood is to drift back again behind the stone-life to that other, which though higher, is not yet self-life. And this is the sin of the medium. Foregoing self, which is not foregoing selfishness, he lets slip his grasp upon the rudder of his consciousness and glides aimlessly upon the open sea, becoming once more as one of the early down-coming beings in evolution. How then to avoid mediumship? First make an end once for all of all those moments in which we sit thinking of nothing in particular. For it is not we ourselves, properly speaking, who think those scattered thoughts that come drifting in idle moments

through the chambers of the mind. How seldom do we say, " I will think of that till I have solved it." An idea drops into our minds and we act upon it, and that we call decision. This is the age of mediums, of mediums full-blown, and of mediums developing. We must put a strain upon ourselves; we must learn to reach the end of each day with the knowledge that from moment to moment we hunted from our minds every thought that was not of our own choosing, that did not bear upon our growth and upon our work. There is (it is said) a certain Master in Occultism who sets to his pupils one chief task: to begin in the evening with the last thought, to proceed back from that to the thought that led to it, and from that to the next link in the chain, and so through *all* that weary chain, uncoiling all the line of thought. They mark as they pass from point to point every thought that was irrelevant, that drifted in upon them and was accorded a home. The man of this age drifts; he can spend an hour in a train and not think one single thought that was of any moment or worth to any mortal, and of which the majority were distinctly retrograde. All this we have to alter; let us live more really, more strongly. That hour in the train was wasted, died in its birth, stolen from ourselves and from others. What is the length of life? Is it number of days, number of years, or is it the content and value of the days and years? An hour in the train! why there are whole lives wasted, emptied rotten into time's dustbin, no single thought, no single aspiration to stay their rottenness, to be a moment's food for the disembodied self where he looks back throughout its length of life. So John Smith is again John Smith, again and again, for his life has sowed no seeds that can sprout in the fields of eternal thought. We are all preparing mediumship for some future life, if we do not grasp ourselves with more strength, and think, fight with the drifting crowd of thoughts from others, and cease to pass the false coinage of the nineteenth century. As with all other things, the remedy is effort. Imagine the thought of that last hour of life, the first of death, when, doing under the stern tutelage of Nature what we neglected in the years of life, we go solemnly and accusingly back through those years, back, back, and never an aspiration to comfort our despair, never one hour of high thinking, never one heart-pang for the pain of others. In that time we are not as now, drifting about amidst the things about us; closeted with ourselves alone, there is nothing to narcotise the conscience, nothing to hide the accusing finger of the self of Nature. No words are needed here to accentuate the lesson; there can be none of us who have never suddenly wondered of what count we are in Nature, how worse would be mankind if we had never lived. Let us take share in the agonies of Nature's advance, do something, think something from hour

to hour that shall help her and transform us from her creatures to her helpers.

We talk much of the rush and competition of life. There need be no rush in us, *we* need not reflect the flicker of the red fire of cities. We can have an unmoving faith that good descends upon the world at last, and that the last acts of the drama of humanity will breathe the air of a vast peace and brotherhood. Knowing that, where is our unrest; knowing that, how great is the opportunity for him who already knows the end. For the very thought of that sweet end, itself a prelude to still grander beginnings, will give us already foretaste of its golden calm, and moving in that ideal vision we can spread something of its tints among men. Let us think then; let us review ourselves from hour to hour, noting for our warning and for our future care, the thoughts that drifted and went no-whither, the petty irritabilities, the wounds we dealt out thoughtlessly as we passed along, the selfish grip we laid upon the common things of life, things that in the gift would have advantaged somewhat perhaps the course of some other life, and that anyhow in the gift would have wakened in one other and ourselves the waning spirit of brotherhood. We have talked of states and planes of consciousness! let us note them and place highest beyond all reckoning the state that follows upon acts done in the spirit of brotherhood, and that state when we noted it, we can make the common one of our lives, even when there are no acts to be done. Here is our great feat of occultism; here is the culmination of the planes of meditation, the fruit eaten by the Masters. It is within the power of every mortal. Create by some kindly act between yourself and one other that indescribable consciousness that is not self-applaudation. Manifesting at first as self-approval, it becomes a glow at the heart, a friendliness, a kindliness, which beginning for one, ends for all, a benediction from the conscience, a momentary loss of the feeling of smallness, of meanness, an inner fearlessness, a feeling of having acted under the approving eye of Nature, a fellow-feeling with life and lives one and all. It is all these. And now you have got it, study it, learn how to produce it even when alone in your room, at every hour. Note at night where in the day you failed to have it, and next day fail less. Meditate a few minutes daily on it, even an hour, and excluding every thought and every idea, remain in that strong feeling. Go out, as Buddha said, in imagination, to the four quarters of the earth with it, and go upon all planes of life with it, from man to the very stones. Think nothing, only feel this. Then in that practice, in that noble humanity, in that high consciousness that fades not from moment to moment, we become batteries charged with the intensity of charity and brotherhood, and whoso will can draw from us a deed and a thought that will help him and make softer the hard face of Nature. And in that meditation, the

sacredest and the highest upon which mortal man can enter, we take surely and slowly a birth into new life that cannot be jarred by the body's death, life lit by a sun that hath no setting, holy and strong and vast as Nature. For Nature *is* holy; throughout all her space is the breath of one conscious life, and they who would know it, and feel the inspiration of its touch, must take this royal path. Far up upon its heights, but not too far to help, stand they who from age to age have been and are yet the teachers of humanity. Take whom we will of these, so that we fashion in our minds some living image and in our hearts some imperishable faith; that faith stands upon a living fact. This century is losing its ideals, and if we would save the age, we must make them live again. In and with ourselves is the first work, to learn to know. If we would have their companionship, feel within their strength, hear within their voice, we must become in spirit like them, work as they worked on earth, open in deed, in thought and in meditation that conscious communication. Let us exclude the lurking doubt of the lower self, blinded in matter, and try this supreme life, for it will not at last fail us.

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NEO-PLATONISM.

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Neo-Platonism—that is, New Platonism—is, essentially, much the same thing as Old Platonism. It is the name given to the body of doctrines professed by a school of philosophy which arose at Alexandria during the third century of the Christian era. This philosophy was based, as its name declares, upon the teachings of Plato, and more particularly, upon the mystic, or esoteric, aspect of those teachings. By modern scholars, with one brilliant exception, the writings of the Neo-Platonists have been almost completely ignored. Commentators upon Plato, whose whole equipment consists in a more or less competent knowledge of the Greek grammar, will tell you that what the Neo-Platonists did, was, to obscure the clear meaning of their master under a veil of fanciful and generally absurd mysticism. It is permissible, however, to doubt whether Plato's meaning be quite so clear as some of these grammatical persons suppose. Aristotle studied it for twenty years, and it is by no means sure that he clearly understood it, even then.

Plato derived his learning from many sources. He was, as you know, the pupil of Socrates. After the death of his master he studied, under Cratylus, the system of Heracleitus the obscure. Next, he went to Italy, where he learned the doctrines of Pythagoras; and Pythagoras, says Madame Blavatsky, "obtained his knowledge in India, or from men who had been there."* At a later date Plato journeyed to Egypt "for the purpose," says his biographer, Olympiodorus, "of conversing with the priests of that country; and from them he learned whatever pertains to sacred rites." That is to say, in Egypt he was initiated. And lastly, travelling into Phœnicia, he learned there the science of the Magi. Thus he became acquainted with the occult wisdom of India, of Egypt, and of Persia.

In the writings of Plato, therefore, this occult wisdom may be discovered, by those who possess the Key; for, in the words of *Isis Unveiled*, "every time the subject touches the greater secrets of the Oriental *Kabala*, secrets of the true cosmogony of the universe, and of the *ideal*, pre-existing world, Plato shrouds his philosophy in the profoundest darkness."† With

* *Isis Unveiled*, Vol. I, p. 9

† Vol. II. p. 39.

the immediate disciples of Plato, the knowledge of his esoteric meaning passed away, not to be revived for several centuries. "This task," says Thomas Taylor, the Platonist, "was reserved for men who were born indeed in a baser age, but who being allotted a nature similar to their master were the true interpreters of his sublime and mystic speculations. Of these Plotinus was the leader, and to him this philosophy is indebted for its genuine restoration, and for that succession of philosophic heroes, who were luminous links of the golden chain of deity."* These "philosophic heroes" were the Neo-Platonists, of whom I am now to speak. I propose, therefore, in the first place, to give you a very brief historical account of the Neo-Platonists themselves, and after that, to attempt some slight examination of the doctrines which they promulgated. In quoting from their works, I shall make use of the translations by Thomas Taylor, whose life-long and enthusiastic services to the cause of Platonic philosophy must always be remembered, by every true Platonist, with feelings of gratitude and admiration.

The foundation of the Neo-Platonic school is ascribed to Ammonius Saccas, a working-man of Alexandria, who died, at a very advanced age, in the year 243 of the Christian era. But we know very little about Ammonius. He was the son of Christian parents. Porphyry tells us that he renounced Christianity: certain of the Christian Fathers tell us that he did nothing of the kind. I should be inclined, on more than one account, to take Porphyry's word for it, but it may be possible in some measure to reconcile these opposite statements. Ammonius, it cannot be doubted, held, as modern Theosophists hold, the great doctrine of the fundamental unity of all religions. He found it necessary, as many since his time have found, to abandon the forms of Christianity; getting rid of the husks, as it were, to arrive at the kernel; renouncing *a* religion, to attain religion itself. Thus even in separating himself from the Christian Church, he might be said to remain a Christian in the esoteric sense.

But the most important thing we have to remember respecting Ammonius, is, that one day, while he was lecturing in his school at Alexandria, a young Egyptian entered the school, brought thither by a friend. This young man was a student of philosophy; he had already attended one of the many schools then flourishing in Alexandria, and had got very little satisfaction out of it. After listening for some time to Ammonius, he turned to his friend, and exclaimed, "This is the man I have been seeking!" He immediately attached himself to Ammonius, and remained in Alexandria for eleven years as his disciple. The name of the young student was Plotinus.

* Introduction to the Select Works of Plotinus, p. 8.

In one of his essays, Mr. Walter Pater has a fine sentence about Plotinus. He calls him "that new Plato, in whom the mystical element in the Platonic philosophy had been worked out to the utmost limit of vision and ecstasy." This is not only finely said, but very truly said. Plotinus inaugurated for us a new era of Platonic interpretation. How much he owed to Ammonius we cannot tell; for the writings of Ammonius, if he *did* write, are not now extant. The works of Plotinus, however, we fortunately possess, in fifty-four books; each of which, says his English translator, Thomas Taylor, "is an oracle of wisdom and a treasury of invaluable knowledge."

I shall presently try to put before you a few fragments roughly broken off from the mass of wealth which these treasures contain, but before doing so it will perhaps be as well to finish this slight historical sketch of the Neo-Platonic school. Having studied philosophy for eleven years at Alexandria, Plotinus travelled into Asia with the intention of investigating the religion and philosophy of the Persians and Indians in their native homes. This purpose, however, he was prevented from carrying out by reason of the war between Rome and Persia, but his writings prove that he was acquainted with the wisdom of the East. In his fortieth year he came to Rome, where he resided thenceforward. The most distinguished disciple of Plotinus was Porphyry, a native of Tyre, many of whose writings remain to us, though many also are lost. Among the missing, unfortunately, is a book which would have had a great interest for us: his book against the Christians, which raised a terrible disturbance at that time. It is said that above thirty Christian authors wrote replies to it, some of them of very great length, and they called Porphyry all the bad names they could think of. And finally, though a long time after Porphyry was dead, the Christian Emperor Theodosius ordered the book to be publicly destroyed, and not a single copy escaped. We can judge of the book now only from certain extracts which have been preserved in the writings of Christian fathers. Porphyry seems to have made a distinction between the Christianity of Christ, and that of the Christian Church; and he declared that the Christians had perverted the pure doctrines of Christ; which was perfectly true. He attacked the authenticity of the Book of Daniel, and maintained that it was a spurious production, of much later date than that which was claimed for it. In this also, I suppose, many people would now admit that he was perfectly in the right. But the views of some of the more philosophical Christians, during those early centuries, were considerably coloured by Platonism.

To Porphyry succeeded a number of more or less distinguished Platonists, some of whom have left writings of high interest and value. But it is not necessary to recite a list of names. The greatest of the successors

of Plotinus and Porphyry was undoubtedly Proclus, who was born at Byzantium in the year 412, and died in 485. Proclus, according to his biographer Marinus, was very particular about observing religious rites and institutions, not only of his own country, but of other nations as well. I do not think it can be supposed that he acted thus altogether from superstition, and it is quite certain that he was profoundly versed in the esoteric meaning and value of all these rites and institutions. But in the time of Proclus the ancient beliefs and philosophies were fast fading away before the advancing power of Christianity, Even before Proclus was born, the edicts of the Emperor Theodosius had let loose upon the empire, under the name of Christianity, a flood of barbarism and superstition. Those who adhered to the ancient faiths were insulted and persecuted, their rites were forbidden, their temples everywhere destroyed. When Proclus was yet a child, the light of the Platonic school of Alexandria, Hypatia, was murdered—torn limb from limb by a rabble of Christian monks. Porphyry was right: the Christians had indeed perverted the doctrines of their founder! The Gospel of peace and good-will had become in practice a well-spring of strife, of persecution, and of spiritual despotism. With the ancient religions, the ancient philosophy, or Theosophy—for what is philosophy in its highest form but Theosophy?—was also doomed. Its extirpation would doubtless have been more rapid had not the Christians been diverted by their innumerable internal dissensions. They hated each other even more than they hated the pagans. I think, then, that the minute observance which Proclus is said to have paid to the rites and formalities of the old religions can be attributed to no other cause than his desire to honour and publicly support them in this time of danger, and to his consciousness that in upholding this religion he was doing his best to uphold philosophy also against their common enemy.

The writings of Proclus are of the greatest value. The most important of those which remain are commentaries on the works of Plato, and it is almost impossible to get at the full meaning of Plato in the more occult parts of his works, unless we study them with the aid of these commentaries of Proclus. He was succeeded by several eminent Neo-Platonic philosophers. But in the reign of the bigot Justinian the persecution of the pagans became more acute, and the public teaching of philosophy was terminated when the Emperor closed the school of Athens in the year 529. A few of the ejected philosophers sought the protection of Khosru, King of Persia, who, says Taylor, "was the means of procuring for them an exemption from the barbarous penal laws of Justinian against the pagans; and thus enabled them to end their days in security and peace, and in the enjoyment of that liberty of conscience which no religion before the Christian ever attempted to destroy."

We have seen, then, that the school of philosophy to which the name of Neo-Platonic has been given, existed for a period of some 300 years, from its foundation by Ammonius, the porter, to its suppression by Justinian, the Emperor. I must now try to give you some glimpse, necessarily very inadequate, of the nature of that philosophy itself, and in doing so I shall draw my illustrations chiefly from the writings of Plotinus. According to that philosopher, the hypostases or principles of things are three: the One, Intellect, and Soul; and as Intellect emanates from the One, so also does Soul emanate from Intellect. We will attempt a brief investigation of these three principles, separately, and in their proper order.

The One, then, is that which is indeed incomprehensible, though it is called by many names. It is the First Cause, the hidden Deity, the Absolute, Parabrahm. But the Platonic philosophers refer to it chiefly by these two appellations—the One, and the Good; by *the One* denoting that Unity from which all things proceed; by *the Good*, "that supreme object of desire to which all things ultimately tend." And that impulse of the soul which causes it to return to the source from which it descended, is Love.

Damascius, one of the latest of the Neo-Platonists, has this analogy respecting the One: "he is truly an incomprehensible and inaccessible light, and is profoundly compared to the Sun; upon which the more attentively you look, the more you will be darkened and blinded; and will only bring back with you eyes stupified with excess of light." But although it is impossible to comprehend the One, it is nevertheless necessary to postulate it, as the source of all things. For it is evident that without the One, the *many* could not subsist; for, as Proclus says, if multitude did not participate of the One, neither would the whole be *one* whole, nor would each of the parts be *one* part, but the whole would be many wholes, and each part many, and so on *ad infinitum*. The One, therefore, is the source of all things, but it is no thing. It is not Intellect, nor Soul, nor is it even Being; for it transcends Being; it is One alone.

We come now to the second hypostasis or principle of Plotinus: *viz.*, Intellect. But here it is necessary to premise that the word Intellect is used in a sense very different from that in which we commonly employ it. It is the Greek νοῦς—that which *perceives* itself—self-consciousness. Now it is clear that the One cannot be self-conscious; for self-consciousness implies a certain duality or even triplicity; there is consciousness itself, there is that which is conscious, and that of which it is conscious. Whereas the One, as we said, is One alone. But let us consider the Intellect—νοῦς—from this point of view. There is that which perceives, *viz.*, the Intellect strictly speaking; that by which it perceives, *viz.*, the Intelligence, and that which is perceived, *viz.*, the Intelligible. But, evidently, the first thing which the Intellect perceives will be, that it *is*;

and therefore, the Intelligible is, primarily, Being, or Essence. Intellect moreover perceives that it is *not One;* since, if it were One simply, it would have no perception of itself. But it is One by participation of the One; for it emanates immediately from the One, and therefore participates more fully of the One than those natures do which are subsequent to itself. Intellect, then, is both one and many, or many in one; or, in the words of Plotinus, it is "a multitudinous impression of *the good* which entirely abides in unity." And again he says: "With the whole itself it perceives the whole, and not a part by a part."

"Now being two" (I am still quoting from Plotinus), "this *one* thing is at once intellect and being; intellective and intelligible. It is intellect indeed, so far as it is intellective; but being, so far as it is intelligible, or the object of perception to intellect. But intellectual perception could not subsist, if difference and sameness did not exist." That is to say, there is clearly a difference between perceiving and being perceived, although, in so far as the perception is *true*, there is also a sameness between perceiver and perceived; since *absolute* knowledge, which subsists on this plane of intellect, is nothing else than the identity of the subject perceiving, with the object of its perception. But to return to Plotinus:—

"It is likewise necessary to assume together with these [that is, with difference and sameness], motion and permanency. And motion indeed is necessary if being intellectually perceives; but permanency in order that it may remain the same; and difference in order that it may be at once intellective and intelligible. For if you take away difference from it, then becoming *one* it will be perfectly silent. It is necessary, however, that intellective natures should be different from each other; and that they should also be the same with each other, since they subsist in the same thing, and there is something common in all of them. Diversity, likewise, is *otherness*. But these becoming many, produce number and quantity. And the peculiarity of each of these produces quality; from all which, as principles, other things proceed."

Thus the intelligible world, which is all comprehended in this word Intellect, or Nous, comprises the intelligible (which is essence); intelligence (which is life); and the intellectual; sameness and difference; motion and permanency; and finally number, quantity, and quality.

"It comprehends in itself," says Plotinus, "all immortal natures, every intellect, every god, and every soul, all which subsist in it with invariable stability. . . All things that are there are perfect. Intellect perceives, not investigating, but possessing. It possesses all things in eternity."

And in another place he says:—

"Intellect is real being, and possesses all things in itself, not as in place, but as itself, and as being one with them. But all things there subsist collectively at once, and yet nevertheless they are separated from each

other ; since the soul also, which has many sciences in itself simultaneously, possesses them without any confusion. Each also, when it is requisite, performs what pertains to it, without the co-operation of the rest."

And once more :—

"Intellect is as it were the first legislator, or rather the law itself of existence. Hence it is rightly said, that it is the same thing to perceive intellectually and to be, and that the science of things without matter is the same with the things themselves."

To this part of our discourse, which deals with the subject of Intellect, belongs the consideration of the Platonic doctrine of Ideas. Ideas are defined as "the exemplary causes of things, which perpetually subsist according to nature." You know that this visible universe and all that it comprises—all *corporeal* natures, that is to say—are said to have no real subsistence of their own. They are merely images or reflections of something which has a real subsistence. Plotinus somewhere compares the forms which are in matter to a reflection in a looking-glass, which appears to possess form and substance, though actually it possesses nothing but the appearance ; for the real thing, of which it is a reflection, is somewhere else—it is not in the looking-glass. Now this real thing, of which the whole visible universe is the reflection, subsists in the intelligible world ; for the intelligible, as we have seen, is real being. This archetypal world, then, contains the ideas of all things, or rather, it *is* the ideas of all things, collectively and unitedly—the many in one. Corporeal natures reflect intelligible ideas : incorporeal natures participate them. Ideas, moreover, are permanent, because the permanent alone is real. Change, decay, and imperfection have no place in the world of ideas ; for these things are the passions of matter, which is non-being. And change and imperfection are in incorporeal natures in so far as they are drawn to matter, and become assimilated to it, forgetting whence they came, and in what their true being consists. Thus there is an idea of good, but there is no idea of evil ; since good is positive, while evil is negative merely, a defect or privation of good, just as darkness is a privation of light. And, to carry yet further this analogy, we say that Intellect is absolute light, and matter is absolute darkness or privation ; while between Intellect and matter is Soul, proceeding from Intellect, descending into Matter, and again reascending to its parent, Intellect ; and experiencing, during its course through time, every possible degree of illumination, from the perfect splendour of the liberated soul, to the dim twilight of the most degraded, trembling, as it were, on the very verge of nothingness.

With one more brief quotation from Plotinus, I will conclude what I have to say this evening on the subject of the second Platonic hypostasis :

"Intellect," he says, "is truly the maker and demiurgus. Matter, receiving forms, becomes either fire, or water, or air, or earth ; but these forms proceed from another cause, and this is Soul. Soul imparts form (or

appearance) to the four elements of the world; but Intellect becomes the supplier of productive principles to Soul; just as productive principles being inserted from the Arts in the souls of artists, enable them to produce works of art."

This leads us to the third hypostasis—Soul, of which Plotinus gives the following definition:—

"Soul is the reason or discourse (λόγος) of Intellect, and a certain energy of it, just as Intellect is of that first God who is beyond Intellect."

And in another place he says:—

"Although Soul is so great a thing, yet it is a certain image of Intellect. And just as external discourse (or speech) is an image of the discursive energy within the soul, after the same manner, soul, and the whole of its energy, are the discourse of Intellect, and a life which it emits as the principle or hypostasis of another thing; just as in fire, the inherent heat of it is one thing, and the heat which it imparts another."

Soul, then, subsists primarily in Intellect, and proceeds from it as the principle of the universe. Intellect, indeed, is the demiurgus, the creator, but it is through Soul that the work of creation is effected. In Intellect the universe subsists in reality, but not in appearance: Soul fashions the visible image, and fills it with life.

"For," says Plotinus, "just as the rays of the sun, illuminating a dark cloud, cause it to become splendid and golden to the view, thus also, soul entering into the body of heaven gave it life, gave it immortality, and excited it from its torpid state. . . . But before this, it was body without life; or rather, the darkness of matter and nonentity."

But Soul, as he says:—

"Does not give life to individuals through a division of itself into minute parts, but it vivifies all things with the whole of itself; and the whole of it is present everywhere, in a manner similar to its generator," Intellect.

Soul, therefore, like Intellect, is both one and many; and the one is many, and the many are one, and yet many. From the one Soul which is derived from Intellect proceed the soul of the universe and all the souls which are contained in the universe; and one essence is in all. And the capacity of the whole is in each; so that each soul is the one soul in capacity, though not in energy. For when Soul descends into a material nature, its energies are necessarily limited by the vehicle which it has made for itself. Nor, again, is it to be supposed that on quitting this vehicle, the body, the soul loses its individuality. We have seen that Intellect comprises in itself many natures, all united in one essence, yet each distinct in energy. Just in the same way, the Soul which proceeds from Intellect, comprises in itself many individualities, also one in essence but distinct in energy.

"Apart from bodily differences," says Plotinus, "souls differ, especially in their manners, in the operations of the reasoning power, and from pre-

vious lives. . . . All souls are all things, but each is characterized by that which energizes in each. This, however, is the same thing as to assert that one soul indeed is united in energy, another in knowledge, and another in appetite. Different souls also behold different objects, and are and become the very objects which they behold."

"But," says he in another place, "no being perishes. The intellects which are in the intelligible do not perish because they are not corporeally distributed into one thing; but each remains, professing in *difference* a sameness of subsistence, in which its very being consists. In the same way with souls: they preserve their sameness and their difference, and each remains one, and at the same time all are one. We have shown that all souls are from one soul, and that all of them are divisible and at the same time indivisible. The Soul also, which abides on high, is the one reason of intellect, and from this Soul partial reasons (or souls) are derived, in the same manner as partial intellects are derived from one Intellect which ranks as a whole."

These three, then—the One, Intellect, and Soul—are, according to Plotinus, and the Platonic philosophers in general, the hypostases or principles of all things. We will now take a brief glance at one or two further points of this philosophy, and in the first place, following the example of the soul, we will proceed to matter. Matter is defined by Plotinus as "a certain subject and receptacle of forms." That is to say, it has no objective existence, but it has a certain existence as the subject of form. For of itself matter has neither quality nor quantity: it is simply privation of being—non-being. And Soul, investing this non-being with forms which are the images of those true forms or ideas which subsist in Intellect, produces body—that is, an illusory appearance of being. There is, however, another kind of matter, which is the subject of true forms, and this matter pervades the intelligible world, just as that which we commonly call matter pervades the apparent or sensible world. But the intelligible world, as we have seen, is the world of real being, and therefore intelligible matter is essence; and, on the other hand, the sensible world is the world of illusion, and the matter which is there is non-being. Essence, moreover, is changeless; but the matter which is in generated natures is always changing its form. Thus matter is also defined as that which is always becoming, but never *is*.

The illusory nature of the visible universe is of course, with all Platonists, an essential article of their creed. But while admitting this to the fullest extent, they did not all think it necessary to despise the world on that account, or to shut their eyes to the beauty of its illusions. You know that the love of beauty was one of the great characteristics of the ancient Greeks. This national sentiment was shared by some of their philosophers, who perceived the affinity subsisting between external and internal beauty. In Plato's works, especially, the artistic feeling is easily recognisable. But even in Plotinus, one of the most mystic of the

Platonic philosophers, this sense of beauty was not wanting. "This world is an image of the intelligible," he says. "But what more beautiful image of it could there be?" And again he says: "His mind must be dull and sluggish in the extreme, and incapable of being incited to anything else, who on seeing all the beautiful objects in the sensible world, all this symmetry and great arrangement of things, and the form apparent in the stars though so remote, is not moved by the view, and does not venerate them as admirable productions of still more admirable causes." He even goes the length of saying that "nothing which is *truly* beautiful externally, is internally deformed. For everything which is externally beautiful, is so in consequence of the domination of inward beauty." And to those who adduce instances of evil souls inhabiting beautiful bodies, Plotinus says, that in such cases either the external beauty is *false*—not what he means by true beauty—or that the inward deformity is, as it were, adventitious, and results from some impediment which temporarily prevents the soul from emerging according to its better nature. It is a very difficult question, and we will not discuss it at present. But I suspect that by *true* external beauty, Plotinus means something more than mere correctness of form.

By way of conclusion, I propose to say a few words upon the great Theosophic doctrines of Karma and Reincarnation, as they are presented in the writings of the Platonists. The doctrine of Karma, indeed, we shall not find definitely formulated there as we have it in the writings of Madame Blavatsky, but it is certainly implied in the Platonic philosophy, and sometimes more than implied. There is a very beautiful allegory in the last book of Plato's *Republic*, concerning the influence of necessity and free-will in the life of the soul. Around the distaff of Necessity, he says, the whole Universe revolves; and within this mighty power each soul has a certain right of choice as what its future life shall be. But this choice of the soul is controlled, or limited, by the Fates, the daughters of Necessity; and their names are the Past, the Present, and the Future. And it is the Fate of the Past who grants, and controls, this power of choice in the soul; for she comprehends in herself both the present and the future. That is to say, our free will is bounded, our present actions and the whole of our future existence are directed by the course of our past lives. And this, as I take it, is the doctrine of Karma.

The later Platonists held the same doctrine. "Each soul," says Plotinus, "descends to that which is prepared for its reception, according to similitude of disposition. For it tends to that to which it has become similar." And again he says: "No one can ever fly from the punishment which it becomes him to suffer for unjust deeds. For the divine law is inevitable." That is, the law of Karma. He speaks also of the apparent

injustice which is so frequent in human affairs, of the sorrows and misfortunes which come upon people, as it seems, through no fault of their own; and these things, he says, are the result of our own actions in a previous life. Thus he teaches reincarnation together with Karma, and these two doctrines are, perhaps, inseparable. But further, both these doctrines are again united in the teaching that we must suffer where we have sinned; that on whatever plane of existence the debt has been incurred, on that plane the payment also must be made. This teaching also we find in Plotinus. Souls that have bodies, he tells us, must be punished in the body. But souls that are pure—that have ceased to reincarnate—are "there where essence and being and that which is divine, subsist, *viz.*, in God."

The Platonists, indeed, always regarded the connection with body as a species of death to the soul. For matter being, as we have said, a privation of being, and body an illusion, it is evident that in so far as the soul is drawn to matter, and becomes engrossed with the affairs of the body, so far it recedes from real being and its true life. The soul, therefore, can be said *wholly* to live, only when it is entirely liberated from its sepulchre, the body. And this liberation is the work of the soul alone. It is by no means effected by the death of the body. Porphyry has these words: "That which nature binds, nature also dissolves: and that which the soul binds, the soul likewise dissolves. Nature, indeed, bound the body to the soul; but the soul binds herself to the body. Nature, therefore, liberates the body from the soul, but the soul liberates herself from the body." For the soul, then, which has not of itself severed the bonds which connect it with the body, the death of the body is no release. It must reincarnate, and again reincarnate, until the bond is loosened, and the purified soul, its long pilgrimage ended, is restored to its true home in the intelligible world.

"Many souls," says Plotinus, "who once ranked among men, do not cease when liberated from bodies to benefit mankind." Thomas Taylor was of opinion that Plotinus himself had incarnated solely for the benefit of mankind; and to those who have studied the writings of the great Neo-Platonist, such an opinion will not appear absurdly extravagant. After his death, Apollo's oracle declared him freed from the necessity of re-birth. And Plotinus himself appears to have had some presentiment of his approaching liberation. As he lay dying, a friend, whose coming had been delayed, entered the room. To him the philosopher addressed his last words: "I have been expecting you," he said; "and now I go to restore the divine part in me to that divine nature which flourishes throughout the universe."

W. E. Ward.

REINCARNATION.

LIFE on this particular globe and in this particular portion of it is so very unsatisfactory to a large number of us that we, naturally enough, continually ask, "What is the good of it? Why are we here at all and what is to be the next move?" And the religion of the country says, "It is the Will of God, who created Man to glorify Himself." And the next move for the wicked man who declines to praise the works of this God is Hell, which is not satisfactory, and smacks of priestly invention, besides leaving the question where it was. Others tell us we are a product of a tendency of atoms to congregate and form complex beings, and that we are going nowhere in particular for no particular reason—and this is not comforting either.

Then the doctrine of Reincarnation is put before us, and a good many of us jump at it and are sure that now we know all about it and it is quite easy and simple. We are here because we want to be, and we don't enjoy it much because we have tried to have a good time in previous lives, and have to bear the reaction now, like a man who gets gloriously drunk one day and realises next day that life is an empty fraud and a police cell is lacking in comfort. Then we see that by skilful avoidance of evil in this life, we may contrive to get a pretty comfortable time in the succeeding life, just as the good young man avoids getting drunk because of the headache to follow. But somehow this view of life is not ennobling either, and though egotism tells us in the name of common-sense that it is enough to live and be happy, yet there is an unsatisfied yearning in our nature for something more, a nobler, fuller life. But why? Having learned the doctrines of Reincarnation and Karma, and seeing for ourselves that morality ensures a comfortable life: why not live and be moral and make comfortable Karma for future lives? It seems good enough, and admirably suited to the commercial instincts of the noble British nation. There is this little trouble about it. We *can't* be satisfied. Experience teaches that very soon, and only when one has abandoned hope and expectation can any satisfaction come. All this of course only applies to those in whom the thinking mind has begun to work, for the others, whose minds (?) are mere reflectors as yet, do not ask questions but simply seek their daily food and comfort, and for them almost any simple form of superstition is enough, whether it be called Religion or Science, and the priests of either class will provide all the creeds that are required. Sometimes, however, the whole mass of a race seems to outgrow its creeds, and the priesthoods who always lead from behind, keeping

well in the rear of the march of evolving mind, find themselves out of tone with even the rear guard of their followers (?) and then there is trouble, and a new set of creeds has to be fixed up. Fortunately the great thinkers are always ready to grant the priesthoods the loan of some cast off doctrines, and so the game goes on, and the wheel of Evolution rolls heavily round. But the man who has begun to think for himself rejects all creeds, seeking to know the why and the how of Life and the reason of his own existence and of his apparently useless aspirations. Then if he study Theosophy he finds light on these points. He finds that his own high aspirations are accounted for by the theory of a high Spiritual Entity overshadowing and endeavouring to completely incarnate in that centre of forces which appears as his mind and body. His efforts to reach up are the reflected efforts of this Entity to express itself on the earth plane, and then the failure to respond to these efforts results in unhappiness, dissatisfaction and the necessity of the repeated attempts at reincarnation made by this Entity. He learns that Humanity is indissolubly united in its essence and that it is eternally evolving, and that the men and women of to-day are but the outer garments of the same Spiritual Beings whose efforts and failures have peopled the past ages with human beings, and that the object of Life on this globe is to bring the whole of the race into a fitting state to pass on to a better sphere of action, and that to accomplish this object one thing is absolutely necessary, Brotherhood amongst men. And so he finds the starting point of all progress is also the final word, Brotherhood, and on that all the ethics of the world are built. The recognition of the synthesising force is Love, the watchword of the great Saviours of the World.

Then the doctrine of Re-incarnation becomes of more importance and the thinker begins to see not merely a way to escape suffering temporarily, but the way to become a conscious and active instrument in the evolution of the race.

Now the teachings of the Esoteric Philosophy make man a complex being—and this complexity is classified under seven heads, these divisions being called his principles. But as only a part of these seven is active in ordinary mankind, he is in reality, perhaps, represented as a three-fold being during life. Then we might say that the two extremes which we may call Spirit and Matter are only active when united by the really active energy of the middle one—the Soul—which is the incarnating Ego. This Ego, however, appears to be more a bundle of qualities, or characteristics, than a simple entity, Thus we have certain peculiar characteristics which make each of us distinguishable from one another to those who are acquainted with us, and again for ourselves, apart from the fundamental consciousness of "I am I" which makes our individual existence a certainty to each of us, there is memory which alone enables us to identify the *I* of to-day with the *I* of yesterday, or of an hour ago.

So I would say that there is an inherent sense of *individuality* which is inseparable from a man, and may be the man himself, and there is memory, an attribute of the man by which he links a certain series of experiences together and so builds up a *personality* which is the outward expression of the inherent feeling of *individuality*.

Now the ordinary memory employed by us is a faculty that almost entirely deals with the experiences of the body we are using for this particular lifetime, and as we mostly assume that all which comes to us in the form of memory really does only refer to this one life, it matters little whether it is really the case or not. But the result of this limitation of the memory is that we make in this manner a one-life personality, which is at the same time confused by the ever-present sense of *I am*, which makes us feel that we are not temporary products of memory alone, but permanent entities; we cannot indeed think of the time when we did not exist, although we may be intellectually convinced that there was such a time, and will be again a time when we shall cease to be.

Consequently, when we begin to consider the Re-incarnation theory, and ask "What is it of all these principles and qualities and so on, that really continues, that incarnates and re-incarnates," we find that the answer is naturally, that it is that principle in which the individualizing faculty or tendency exists, and this is called Manas—we readily see that the ordinary memory being concerned with things of one life only, cannot give any clue to the events of preceding lives, and that the memory of such lives must reside in a faculty which is independent of the life of the body and bodily mind and memory.

But now comes a difficulty. If the re-incarnating Ego is this individualizing tendency, it implies that this too is but a quality or characteristic of something beyond; and as moreover we find upon enquiry of each and all that, when closely pressed home, the question "What are you?" meets with the same answer in the end, "I am *I*," then we naturally ask "Is there only one ultimate *I*?" and is that *I* the same in all, or is the sense of *I am* in one different to the sense of *I am* in another. The differences being all in the qualities, attributes, appearances and limitations of the experiences of *I* and not in it itself, for it still remains simply *I* under all circumstances.

Now here is the difficulty, how are we to say that the I of a past life is the I of to-day, and not an appearance on the face of the one great *I* which speaks and declares itself in each one? How are we to understand the teaching that is given in Theosophical writings to the effect that a human being is an individual who carries his own character and progresses or retrogresses through countless lives on this one earth, on the one hand, and the teaching that all that *is*, is but the appearance to itself of the One Reality. I do not pretend to offer an explanation of this problem, but merely point

out that if *That* which is unchangeable and undifferentiated is the One Reality, then obviously the stronger the sense of separate existence becomes, the farther away is it from the One Reality. And at the same time the apparent contradiction must be true, that the stronger the sense of individual permanence and immutability, the nearer the realization of the Great Unity. And this is not so hard to see, for if the Unity of the Universe be a fact (and it seems a necessity of thought to me that it should be so), then that fact must be eternally and universally present in every centre of consciousness in the universe, as its latent and fundamental reality; and it is perhaps this ever present abstraction which baffles us in our efforts to find the individuality in man, and to say it is this or it is that.

But leaving that question, we may take it that there is the greater *I* which is back of all individuality, and which remains apparently unchanged and the spectator of actions done by its reflections or shadows, the separate individualities, then let us assume that there are a number of differentiated individualities which are the re-incarnating Egos of our Humanity, and let us try to see what relation these Egos bear to the personalities they produce and the bodies the latter wear as their outward garments.

Now in this philosophy we find the law of Karma and the law of cycles, which in modern science are, I suppose, represented by the law of the conservation of energy and the law of periodicity. And these laws, or theories, are very important in considering this question of Re-incarnation.

Why are we to-day here in this spot, in this body, and with this character?

First, there seems to be the desire for sentient existence, which impels the Ego to leave its home of spiritual passivity, and, like the knights of old legends, to seek adventure in the world of matter and sensation.

Now there are two ways of regarding this "descent into matter," this fall of the angels, this incarnation of Spirit in matter—we may either say that the Ego seeks experience and goes out to get it, or we may say that the Spiritual Ego looks down on the chaos of matter, and in the spirit of divine compassion descends from its pure state to bring light into darkness and order into the conflicting elements; in fact, to make a cosmos out of chaos. Both these views seem to me to be true, but there is an apparent contradiction in them.

I think that if we push our thought back to its beginning, we have to accept the idea that our first emergence from a state of passive rest into one of active experience is caused by a "desire for sentient existence," because we cannot in thought get behind the origin of thought, so we start with what appears manifest, and we say the Ego seeks experience. Well, the Egos get that, and become so interested in the experiences of the sense world that they forget all about their spiritual origin, and become

almost as material as the beings of the lower planes, so returning to a stage passed through in previous cycles of evolution. Then the Egos who have safely passed through the stage of the material world, looking down, see the failure of their brothers and go down to their rescue, and take on such bodies as are available for the purpose, and these bodies being produced by inferior Egos for lower purposes, may fail to work well in the hands of purer spirits, and so perhaps the attempt may be a failure, and the result may be a genius doing and saying magnificent things in an aimless and rather useless manner, and while wrapt in spiritual abstraction allowing the body to run wild in every kind of excess—or else the personal mind of the man is so elated by the flashes of inspiration, that he asserts himself and takes such possession of his own personality as to shut out the light of his own real genius by his own vanity ; or perhaps it might be truer to say that the Ego in doing his work identifies himself with his instrument and forgets his real nature and purpose, so looking on himself as a separate entity, and losing his way as others have done.

Then we get these men and women, who have identified themselves with their personalities, doing deeds and thinking thoughts which are powerful causes, or seeds sown in the seed time, and these seeds, being not only their own children, but even more truly their own bodies, are so intimately connected with them, that they are inseparable, and the ripening of the crop from these seeds implies the presence of the Ego that planted the seed, for they are of one essence. So that the thought or act is like a seed sown, not in a field far away, but in our own aura, in our very body of bodies, and there lying latent till the recurrence of the conditions favourable to its germination and growth.

Now seeds do not all germinate or grow at the same rate, nor come to maturity at the same season, and the time of germination may be almost indefinitely postponed if the conditions are favourable to that,—just as we have all heard of the peculiar wheat grown from some grain taken from the coffin of a five-thousand-year-old mummy. So the thoughts, words, and acts of a man may mature in his aura under favourable conditions at enormously long periods from their first sowing, and also by altering the conditions the crop may be hurried and brought to a harvest in a very short time.

Now it seems to me that while the " desire for sentient existence " is the constant cause of incarnation, yet that is not sufficient alone to account for the special appearance of a particular Ego in a particular time, place, and condition. But the periodic recurrence of favourable conditions causes the ripening of the seeds of particular desires, and so draws the Ego back into the net of its own weaving, and forces it to accept a body which is the expression of a certain bundle of desires and tendencies, and which form the

character of the personality for that life—but not necessarily at all the real character of the Ego. For the real character of the Ego would be represented by all the desires, tendencies, aspirations, and so on, of all past lives, and I do not see how it can be possible for all these to find expression in any one ordinary life time. Nor do I see how all these varying causes set in motion can all come to maturity in one short life.

Therefore it seems to me that any particular incarnation will represent only some one side of the real character of the incarnating Ego; and as so very large a part of ordinary life goes no further than the mere gratification of quite personal desires and wants, I cannot see that there is very much to be gained by the Ego except a repetition of old experiences, serving only to intensify or gradually satiate the orginal desire, and as the next group of qualities come to maturity and forms again a body (astral) for a new incarnation, a new personality is formed, and the Ego compelled to take up that body finds itself so strongly bound by old habits that it stupidly repeats the old acts in almost the old manner, and not asserting itself strongly fails to make any real connection between the life just past and the present one, the only common factor perhaps being the desire for sensation and the attempt to gratify it.

So there may be thus a number of types of character belonging to each Ego, and these recurring at definite intervals may perhaps account for the varying time periods said to lie between each incarnation.

Thus, suppose the real character of the Ego follows the law said to rule this planet, and arranges itself into seven groups of qualities, these would represent seven personalities or characters, and be like seven character parts played by an actor, the influence of one upon the other being only perceptible in the effect made upon the actor, the Ego. Suppose, for instance, we give names to a few of these characters—Hamlet, Othello, Rosalind, and so on—these may follow each other in pretty close succession and yet the interval between the appearance on the scene of Hamlet and his return to the stage of life might be very considerable, and as Hamlet represents really the Hamlet side of the Ego's character, it would be untrue to say that Hamlet reincarnates as Rosalind, and yet true to say that the Ego has reincarnated when the next character appears on the scene. And if the Ego has begun to re-assert its supremacy over these habits of character and to show itself strongly in each one, then the link between these lives becomes stronger and more manifest, the Ego begins to have a real sway over the life of each, so that they all begin to work in the same direction, and the energy of the Ego is concentrated and its return is prepared. The prodigal is on his way home, rich in experience from one point of view, and with soiled garments from another.

If this suggestion has any truth in it, then we can see why man is

continually told, "Know thyself," "Look within," "The Kingdom of Heaven is within you," and so on, for the way to what the religionists call salvation, and the Socialists progress, and the Theosophists evolution, lies by way of the real Ego and not by way of the personal appearance of it. It is necessary for the Ego to cease to identify itself with each of its temporary characters and to be true to itself in all of them, so it recollects its own object and ceases to tread the useless round of repeated experience.

Not till this point of return is reached is the true individualising process begun. It is said that there are seven stages of initiation in occultism, and perhaps at each of these stages a candidate makes acquaintance with a new aspect of his seven-fold character and conquers it or frees himself from the habit of that character by taking his stand in his real nature and refusing to be blinded by the passions and desires of that personality; so robbed of its vitalising essence, the personality becomes extinct and disintegrates, the causes being met and balanced on the plane of cause and not allowed to reach the plane of effect, so that no longer will any physical embodiment of that character be produced, and the Ego gathers to itself the essence of the experience of that character; and when at last the seventh personality is dissolved and the fruit gathered in, then the Ego is freed from the necessity of rebirth on the physical plane and the work of redemption is accomplished. The at-one-ment is made, and the higher is united to the lower, as it is sometimes said.

The teachings of the Theosophy of to-day for the most part adopt the plan of speaking of two Egos in man, the Higher and the lower, but I have tried to express the same thing in different terms, for I do not think we shall ever learn the meaning of any teaching so long as we merely learn the rules and let the rules become chains to bind us instead of signs to guide us along the path. We must take all the teachings into account, and the one that is sometimes apt to be forgotten, is that each *must* think for himself, and how can he do that if he slavishly bind himself to any formula? So I think that we should not hesitate to try and work out by ourselves and with one another, theories developed out of our efforts to understand these matters.

For we must remember that the whole truth upon spiritual matters could not be expressed in any form of words or in any terms of thought, but could at best be only symbolised by these forms of expression. And if we wish to know whether we have any understanding of a doctrine which we have learned, it is a good plan to try and explain the thing in entirely different terms to someone else. For we only know a thing when we can express it in our own language and in different ways.

Although the method of dividing man into seven principles and then crediting him as I have suggested with at least seven personalities and an

indefinite number of incarnations appears complicated, it is only an analytical way of looking at the entity man who is One eternally as humanity, and in a narrower cycle is one as a conscious individual. And as soon as we have mastered the seven principles and classified all these things we should then try to look at them all as so many phases of the one conscious man, to do which we have to imagine a single centre of individuality passing up and down between and through all these different planes of consciousness, then we must go a step further and try to realise that all these principles are active at once in their own states of time and no time, which is so difficult, that after spending some of our time on the effort to realise in thought that we are actually consciously existing in a state that is not governed by any of our notions of time and space, we shall probably be more willing to say that in every attempted explanation of any problem of life there must always remain a balance of the unknown. And then we shall not be so apt to think we know all about it because we have learned a few rough rules on the general action of the principles.

We are frequently told that all these speculations and reasonings about these difficult questions are no use, and that Jesus and Buddha taught simple morality and so on that any body could understand. Well, in the first place it is not true that the great teachers taught *simply* morality; for their followers had most complicated and profound systems of philosophy. But also there is something always implied which is not true. People say we don't want any intellectual theories and talk about principles and such things to help us to lead good lives. This implies that people have no intellectual theories and notions already in their minds and that they do succeed in leading good lives—which in a general way I don't believe. It is just because our minds are clogged up with mistaken notions about things, about the world we live in, and about ourselves, that it is necessary to administer more theories and doctrines to enable the mind to cure itself by the diet that it can best assimilate. Look, for instance, at the result of giving phenomenal manifestations to people whose psychic faculties are atrophied, why they rise in revolt and take their stand on their misconceptions of the law of Nature, they call on their conjurors to imitate these phenomena by other means, and go on their way more than ever convinced of the non-existence of that which you seek to show them. When a person has been accustomed all his life to recognise other states of being and other beings than the physical earth and mankind, then it may be possible for a master to teach such a pupil by direct demonstration of the thing in itself, but so long as we keep our mind lumbered up with formulas, creeds whether scientific or religious, theories and speculations, we can only clear the ground by studying better theories and by generally attempting an intellectual clearance before we

can even make a fair start on the road to the gaining of a spiritual perception of the truth about ourselves.

So let us take such a doctrine as this one of Reincarnation and not erect it as a crystallised dogma, as an object of worship, but try to keep it in a fluid state so that it may blend with our minds and become a principle in life to us rather than a dogma or creed. Even in its roughest form and crudest expression the theory of Reincarnation appears to me as a ray of light in the darkness and a foundation on which to build hope of future progress, hope of a better and greater humanity and a truer and more intelligent life, than this senseless almost idiotic struggle for existence in which the winner loses as much as the loser, and death the inevitable is the gate to nowhere, and we live for no purpose and die when we can't live any longer.

If the life of Madame Blavatsky had served no other purpose than to bring forward once more this old teaching, even then we should owe her a debt of gratitude which we could only pay by doing as she did, and striving to give to others the light that has brightened our own lives with hope.

R. Machell.

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LIFE ETERNAL.

By ALEXANDER WILDER.

What are we here for?

By C. R. SRINIVASAYANGAR, F.T.S.

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LIFE ETERNAL.

By Alexander Wilder.

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In the sacred books of the Persians is the account of the journey of the pure soul from this world and its reception by the holy ones in the eternal regions. Before setting out, it holds a vigil for three nights at the head of the body which it has abandoned, during which period it experiences as much bliss as all living creatures enjoy. Upon its arrival at the Bridge of Judgment, it is at once divested of the consciousness and other qualities of mind which it had derived from the material world. Immediately there appears to view the figure of a maiden, beautiful and radiant with celestial light, powerful, perfectly developed in form, noble of mien, vigorous like a youth of fifteen, fair as the fairest ones on the earth. The purified one in transports of joy and wonder salutes her as guardian, declaring with admiration: "Never beheld I one so charming." She replies: "I am thy immortal life, thy pure thought, pure speech and action, the goodness which is the law of thy whole being. Thou art seen by me in my own likeness, great, good and beautiful, as I seem to thee. I had been beloved, and thou hast made me yet more beloved: I was beautiful before and thou hast rendered me yet more beautiful. Thou makest delight more delightful, the fair yet fairer, the desirable yet more desirable; and me who sat on high thou hast exalted yet higher by thy resistance to evil, thy goodness, thy pure thought, speech and action." Then guided by her the soul enters paradise.

This vision of beatitude, this concept of the eternal life is attainable by all who rise above the illusions of sense, which like clouds and exhalations from the ground shut the heavens from our view. The eternal world of abiding reality is not afar off from any one of us. The soul, our Psyché, is able, by the power which the true philosophy has revealed, to strip off her caterpillar-shell and unfold her wings, and thenceforth become the denizen of a higher sphere. In this way, the new and more glorious existence begins. The universe then appears in a transfigured form. It had been contemplated when the clouds hid away the sun; but now our view is from an altitude far above the vapour and mist. Instead of an inert matter filling and choking up space, there is now witnessed an eternal stream of life inflowing everywhere—the original, infinite, Divine life. "Pure and holy," says Fichte, "and as near to the infinite essence as aught to mortal apprehension can be, this life flows forth as a band which binds spirits with

spirits in one: as air and ether of the world of Mind, inconceivable and incomprehensible, and yet lying plainly revealed to the spiritual eye. Conducted by this light-stream, thought floats unrestrained and the same from soul to soul, and returns purer and transfigured from the kindred breast. Through this arcane communion the individual finds and understands and loves himself only in another; no isolated thinking, loving and hating, but only a thinking, loving and hating in and through one another. Through this arcane communion, the affinity of spirits in the invisible world streams forth into this corporeal nature and represents itself in two sexes, which, though every spiritual tie should be severed, are still constrained, as natural beings to love each other. It flows forth into the affection of parents and children, of brothers and sisters; as though the souls as well as the bodies were sprung from one blood, and the minds were branches and blossoms of the same stem. And from thence it embraces, in narrower or wider circles, the whole sentient world. Mine eye discerns this eternal life and motion in all the veins of sensible and spiritual nature through what seems to others as a dead mass. It sees this life forever ascend and grow, and transform itself into a more spiritual expression of its own nature. The universe is spiritualised to my contemplation, and bears the peculiar impress of the spirit—continual progress towards perfection in a straight line which stretches into infinity. So I live, and so I am; and so I am unchangeable, firm and complete for all eternity. For this being is not one which I have received from without; it is my own only-true being and essence."

These words of Fichte are abundantly corroborated in our own experience. "It was found," says Professor Tyndall, "that the mind of man is capable of penetrating far beyond the boundary of his free senses; that the things which are seen in the material world depend for their action upon things unseen;—in short, that besides the phenomena which address the senses, there are laws and principles and processes which do not address the senses at all, but which need be and can be spiritually discerned." In this way, accordingly, we become cognisant of our spiritual nature. In more immature periods of life when the corporeal structure seemed to include everything about us, this was not so plain. But as the years accumulate and the interior faculties become more acute, the body, with all its curious organism, seems to be in some respects a thing detached from us and a little interval away. We contemplate it like any other object. It has been necessary all the while to us, and is yet able to make us keenly sensible to the discomforts of cold, pain and fatigue. We need not imagine, however, because of these susceptibilities, that our life is purely, or even chiefly, a thing of the body, or a mere corporeal existence. The psychic nature is distinct from the bodily environment, and in due

time will ripen and become individualised apart from it. We witness the analogy to this in the vegetable kingdom. When the grain of wheat is sown in the ground and springs up, the grassy blade and stalk are vitally important, as also the ear with its growth of chaff. In due time the blossom appears and the kernel forms. All, so far, has taken place for the sake of this result. The office of stalk, leaves and chaffy receptacle comes now to an end. They do not belong any more to the grain, now that it is perfected, and are discarded as rubbish. In a corresponding manner the human soul is sown in the corruptible body and rises from it in an incorruptible form. We perceive this in ourselves as our spiritual faculties extricate themselves from the physical envelope, and so we become clothed upon with immortality. "I *am* immortal" says Fichte "so soon as I form the purpose to obey the law of the spirit; I do not *become* so."

The faith in immortality is our noblest possession. It is rooted in our being, and can never be taken entirely away from us. It is necessary in order to afford us a criterion by which to judge and determine what is right. I would shudder at the wreck which that individual would be, mentally and morally, who should really suppose that from the moment of bodily dissolution, he would totally cease to live and be. A human being, in case that such utter extinction was his destiny, would not differ essentially from a brute, or have other ethics than the wild beasts of the forest. They know no restraint upon rapacious desire, except that of bodily inability; and there would be no adequate reason apparent why he should not do like them. Mankind would thus be left without moral incentive or the wisdom which exalts the nature above the dead level of selfishness and bestiality. I have no confidence or belief in any sentiment of justice which is solely the out-growth and result of human experience. We lose sight entirely of our true selfhood when we can perceive no higher motive than selfishness, and so occupy the imagination with sensuous ideas. When Death is thus made the only reality, existence is very certain to become a burden. No matter what treasures of mind and rich jewels of character may be possessed, they can not be enjoyed, because there is no just conception of their value. The proprietor is really as poor as the beggar at his door. There is no room for love and the other virtues in a man or a world, except there is faith in immortality. Love creates and prepares the place in human hearts for the virtues to fill.

If we would attain to the higher wisdom, it will be necessary for us to discard the limitations of superficial and empirical knowledge. The narrow understanding can comprehend no perception that exceeds its own dimensions. Some such reason as this seems to have induced many to presume that life is purely or chiefly corporeal, and limited by bodily sensibilities. This habit of reasoning, doubtless, instigated the conjecture that there can

be no soul or intellection, except as the brain and corporeal organism exist for its development and maintenance. We may not concede to them this magnified importance. They exist solely from the life and energy which pervade them. Even the protoplasm or initial organism which we hear so much about, is such by virtue of its inherent vital principle, and even then it is not of uniform character. There is a protoplasm for every kind of vegetable production and for every species of animal. Even though it should be demonstrated, therefore, that all protoplasms had like chemical and organic constituents, and that we perceive no form of life till we have first obtained the protoplasm, nevertheless, this diversification of kingdom, race and species, disposes of the whole matter. We may relegate the entire series of phenomena to the background. The principle, the inherent energy, must transcend manifestations.

Everything that exists has its origin from a cause above and anterior to it. Its material basis is not altogether as certain and unequivocal as may be imagined. There is a great probability that the carbon, the iron, silica and potassium which are found in plants, were formed by them from elements derived from the atmosphere; and that lime and flint are animal productions, created by transforming other substance. Beds of flint exist underground at Berlin in Prussia and Petersburg in Virginia, which were the secretions of infusoria. All our lime, chalk and marble are the creation of minute animals. The corallina will deposit more lime in a single season upon their reefs than ever existed in the broadest or deepest seas. There are aërial plants which contain potassium, and there is good reason for believing that the carbon which composes our peat and coal as well as vegetable fibre, was not merely absorbed from the air, but was also derived from certain principles which scientific exploration has not yet been able to detect. I am ready to learn that gold itself is solidified sunshine which had been attracted and enwombed in a matrix of quartz. Eminent savants have assured us that all matter, in its last analysis, would be resolved into points of dynamic force. All the interminable series of material existence are then so many products of force under the direction of an omnific will. Force, being absolutely without dimension, can be nothing else than spiritual substance; and what are termed Properties of Matter are really so many manifestations of spirit. Accordingly when the elements of our corporeal structure shall have been dissolved, which once performed the office of tissue and brain, thus serving as the vehicle of mind and understanding, it does not follow that our psychic nature must perish with them. In fact, this very process of disintegration is constantly going on. The particles which aforetime made up our bodies and brains, were afterward eliminated, and their places taken by others; the vital principle which had attracted and made use of them, surviving their departure. While they

change and pass away, this abides and never loses its identity. It thus manifests itself the greater as well as older; and we have good reason therefore to believe that it will continue when all the corporeal elements have parted from it. As the kernel of wheat does not perish when its chaffy envelope bursts, and it abandons its receptacle upon the stalk, so its counterpart,—the soul and personality—does not cease to be, when it has withdrawn from the body.

In one of the *Upanishads* it is related that a father, whose son was frivolous and sceptical, commanded him to bring a fruit of the sacred fig-tree. "Break it," said the father; "what do you see?" "Some very small seeds," replied the son. "Break one of them: what do you see in it?" the father asked again. "Nothing," answered the son. "My child," said the father, "where you see nothing, there dwells a mighty banyan-tree!"

A reply like this may be made to those who profess to doubt the truth of immortality. Perhaps it will be difficult to prove it by logic and mathematical demonstration, so that the reasoning shall appear conclusive. We are unable to cast a measuring-line over the infinite. The creations of the understanding must of necessity fall short of compassing the faculty of the understanding itself. The fact of such inability, however, does not warrant disbelief. The Australian savage has no developed capacity for mathematical science, yet this does not disprove the existence of mathematics. The child in embryo has lungs, but does not breathe, and unweaned infants cannot rear their kind; yet in both are the rudiments of the powers and functions of adult life. We, too, can enlarge the scope of our mental vision, and may yet develop faculties which we do not now suspect to exist. We are not excluded, therefore, from the hope of a more perfect knowing, nor from a hearty faith in the Infinite and Eternal, and in our own immortality as participants in the Divine nature.

Goëthè has aptly remarked that one who thinks can never quite believe himself likely to become non-existent—that he will ever cease to think and live. Thus spontaneously does every human being cherish the sentiment of an unending life. We are conscious, during the later periods of our earthly existence, that our higher ideals are yet unrealised. The conviction, the prophecy, the moral consciousness hang over the mind that there will yet be a field and opportunity in which to accomplish them. That was a true as well as beautiful saying of Charles Fourier, that every desire which God has implanted in a human soul, is his promise of its fruition. We may rest content, therefore, in the persuasion that the scope of our understanding embraces only ideas which we can yet realise.

The highest evidence of immortality, nevertheless, is of a nature too exalted and arcane to be uttered in any form of words. It is a knowledge

which each may possess for himself, but it may not be imparted. That which is personal and subjective can hardly be rendered obvious to the perception of another individual. Thus I am unable to show to another that I am suffering pain. He must admit the fact from my own testimony solely, as interpreted by his own cognisance of like sensations. In fact, there must be a joint participation of spiritual life in order to be certain of anything beyond the evidence of one's own senses. I may know thus that my conjugal companion loves me, but I am not able to prove this to another by any kind of testimony or reasoning. Yet I am warranted in staking all my earthly future upon the fact.

It has been sagaciously affirmed that one must love before he can know that the object is lovely. By a kindred analogy, it may be declared that in order to perceive our immortality, we must possess it first. Our own interior consciousness or supraconsciousness is thus an abundant and sufficient assurance of the fact. This illustration, however, may not necessarily be extended to the individual who doubts or denies. He may not have become sufficiently matured in his interior perception to enable such cognition, or from some other cause his spiritual faculties may be dormant. It is not my province to judge him for this. He stands or falls at another tribunal; while my works as well as his, must undergo the test of fire.

What, then, let us ask, is Life? The accepted explanation represents it as a principle that coördinates forces. The problem, however, is not unfolded, except we go further. All force is evolved from Being, and only that which subsists from itself can employ any form of coördination. Life is correspondent to light, which in its absolute purity is both invisible and incomprehensible, and can only be perceived after a manner by our corporeal senses, when it has become tempered by intermingling with material substance. The inherent principle of life is Love, and the tenacity to live is correlative with its energy and intensity. The human soul is a mixture of qualities and affections. What we usually denominate *sentiments* are so many elements of our being. Our affections, thoughts, wishes and impulses are not accidents of our nature, but are indeed our very selves. We do not *possess* souls, but are ourselves souls in very actuality. Goodness, virtue and all the nobler incentives, are not mere idealities, void of essential vitality, but are essential fact and substance. Life is no mere problem of mental and physical endowment, but includes within its volume all our qualities of heart and soul. The moral nature constitutes the very substance and marrow of our being. We live by the will to live; our desire and sentiment of a continuous existence are ardent or cold, as accords with our hope, our love, our confidence in ourselves and each other. "It is to that sense of immortality with which the affections inspire us," says Henry Thomas Buckle, "that I would appeal for the best proof of a future life."

So we live, so we are, such we have always been and shall always continue to be. Immortality has its origin and foundation in the soul itself. It is no boon extended to the inhabitants of this earth, but by its inherent nature, is beyond the sphere of the transitional universe. It pertains to our essential being in the eternal region, rather than to our phenomenal existence in Time. We do not *receive* it, because it was always an essential of our spiritual nature. By the knowing of this we perceive and are cognisant of the infinite Verity. We apprehend our true relations as having our citizenship in the heavenly world. By this knowledge we are made pure and holy; we are enlightened and led to live and act as immortal beings.

Thus I may understand why I am to love my neighbour. We are of a common origin, alike in nature and destiny. He is as my own self, my individuality extended to another. Whatever pertains generically to me belongs likewise to him, and the Divinity which arranges my conditions also superintends his allotment. Nor do we part company at the grave, for our relationship and affinities of spirit continue as they were from before Time. Thus my faith and cognisance of immortality endow me with a right understanding of what is due to others. "It is an indispensable condition of a morality that is efficient," says Jacobi, "to believe in a higher order of things, of which the common and visible is an heterogeneous part that must assimilate itself to the higher."

Our individuality, as we exist in this sublunary world, does not constitute the whole of our being. Much that pertains to us essentially has never been developed in this life. Hence we are differentiated rather than integral, a grouping of qualities and characteristics rather than a complete essence. We are influenced by others and imbued more or less by their peculiar nature and disposition; while on the other hand, those with whom we company and whom we love and esteem, take somewhat from us in their turn. The traits which are peculiar to us are chiefly accidents of our individual mode of existence, and very often are the heirlooms of races and families to which we belong. Indeed, we have, all of us, become more or less the continuation and bodying anew of ancestors. The umbilical cord is not really divided, so long as we exist here; and we are nourished from the life and permeated with the thought of a thousand generations. We are shoots and branches of the great World-Tree, and derive sap, all of us in common, from its root.

The unexplained operations of the mind, nevertheless, may by no means be all imputed to heredity. The Rabbis tell us that several souls, human spirits, may adjoin themselves to an individual, and at certain times help, strengthen and inspire him, dwelling with and in him. They generally leave him when their work has been accomplished; but in some

instances, an individual receives this aid all the days of his life. Oliver Wendell Holmes remarks in one of his works, that there are times when our friends do not act like themselves, but apparently in obedience to some other law than that of their own proper nature; and that we all do things both awake and asleep which surprise us. "Perhaps," he adds, "we have co-tenants in this house we live in." John Bunyan also has represented his Pilgrim as being on one occasion infested by a malignant spirit that whisperingly suggested many grievous blasphemies to him, which he verily thought had proceeded from his own mind. We witness something like this in the mesmeric phenomena, and in the contagious enthusiasm of popular assemblages. It is but a step further to acknowledge unqualifiedly the presence and agency of invisible beings. Milton assures us that millions of these are constantly walking the earth. We may not reasonably doubt, when the physical world abounds with innumerable races and genera of living beings, that the invisible region is less densely peopled; nor that we are all surrounded by spiritual entities, bodied and unbodied, that are capable of transfusing their thoughts, impulses and appetences into us. We observe something like this in our mental operations. What we denominate *reasoning* is the conscious endeavour of the understanding to trace out facts, their relations and correspondences. Beyond this region of the soul there is that of the intuitive intellect, more occult and apart from this world. It is not limited, like the other, to matters of experience, but is manifestly in communication with beings and intelligences that are outside of the acknowledged realm of physical existence. Such intercourse is of the eternal world, of which this material universe is but a colony. "Not when I am divorced from the connection of the earthly world," says Fichte, "do I first gain admission into that which is above the earth. I am and live in it already, far more truly than in the earthly. That which they denominate *Heaven* lies not beyond the grave. It is already here, diffused around our nature, and its light rises in every pure heart."

I am convinced that what is commonly recognised as insight, intuition and inspiration, is this faculty of supraconscious intelligence. It is a remembering, the reproducing and bringing into consciousness of what we knew and possessed before we became sojourners in the region of limit and change. It belongs to that sphere of being to which we are now in a manner oblivious and alien. There can be no mental activity without its aid, any more than there can be muscular action without the exercise of the will. This declaration is by no means absurd or irrational. The soul and mind, as indeed the brain itself and the entire nervous system, are antecedent to sensation; and in perfect analogy to this, the faculty of Intellection is not by any necessity a matter of consciousness. It has little to do with the brain-material, and does not oxidise or wear away its tissues.

The individual is not wearied, but actually refreshed and invigorated by its exercise. There is an ocean of mind about us, quick and electric with life, which brings and keeps all souls in communication with each other, like the innumerable drops of water in the ocean of our sublunary world; and its currents make individual understanding, when under peculiar conditions of excitation, receptive of ideas and thoughts which are not, in any common way, original to it. The attempt has been made to set forth that this is a physical operation performed unconsciously by the cerebral organism; but it should be cognised instead as the cerebration of the Great Universal Brain, which the writers of *New Testament* characterise as the Holy Spirit. "Take no thought what you shall speak," said Jesus; "for it shall be given you in that same hour by the spirit within you."

True spirituality consists in being like God, pure and holy through righteousness, and not in wonderful and extraordinary communication with denizens of the invisible region, or even with the angels of the highest heaven. Nor is it well to boast or to be elated with such experiences. To see is better than to be seen. Indeed, it is very questionable whether they may with propriety be spoken about at all. The true spouse rejoices in the possession and society of the conjugal mate, rather than in the boons and endearments that are bestowed, but speaks of none of them to any other person. Greater modesty than this is becoming in regard to these interior associations with the superior world. They should be kept close and sacred from those who have no heart to appreciate them. They are subjective and interior, supraconscious facts of the supersensuous world, which are known only as we know God, and hence may not be converted into images for others to gaze upon with empty curiosity. We are cautioned against such profanation by the assurance that swine will trample stupidly upon our pearls, and dogs will turn upon and rend us, after we have given them the holy bread that might not be thus desecrated. "The psychic man," who cognises matters of sense, Paul declares, "doth not receive the things of the spirit, for to him they are foolishness; besides, he cannot know them, because they are discerned spiritually."

For this reason we may not attempt, nor can we properly delineate the eternal world. We may cognise and be pre-conscious of it; but we are not able to comprehend it fully. It is above and beyond us, and yet is present with us; like the heaven which transcends and at the same time, nevertheless, contains the earth within it. It is spiritual and divine; but to give its altitude, its profoundness and extent is beyond our ken. We may not, however, for such reasons, circumscribe our thoughts and imagination within the limits of daily observation and experience. To withhold our eyes from the vision of the immutable and everlasting would be a suffocating of our higher nature. Nor would it be innocent or blame-

less to be willing thus to remain "of the earth earthy," when our nobler selfhood is from heaven.

Our existence in the material universe is the result of causes which we are hardly sufficient to comprehend. It may have been for the object of perfecting our individuality, and so constituting an essential means to establish our selfhood in a more complete identity. We may not doubt that it is necessary to us, and has its uses, which we may not safely forego. We should also bear in mind that it is the occupying of a certain sphere of being, rather than the mode of dwelling in it. We are really in it before our birth, or even our conception, and do not leave it by the dissolving of the body. That we seem to forsake it through this event is not enough; the condition which allied us to material nature must also be exceeded. Otherwise, like a weed which has been cut off by the hoe in one place, we will be likely to issue forth again in another.

Eternity is in no essential sense a Foreworld or Future State. It is purely the unconditioned, that which always is, which changes not. The soul is native there; and its manifestation elsewhere is accomplished by shutting itself away, so to speak, from that mode of being, after a manner as we shut ourselves from every-day life in going to sleep. It thus passes into the transitional condition, and from being permanent becomes subject to change, from being integral it is differentiated into qualities and faculties, from being eternal it is thus transformed into a being of Time. In this condition, evil—the privation of good—and the contingencies of phenomenal existence, are incident to it. Thus the corporeal environment and the other consequences which it inherits in the world of Nature, are as death and the grave, and even as hell within them, to the essential principle of life.

This is not, however, an abyss of hopeless destruction. The soul, thus enveloped and enthralled by the pains and affections of the body, is in a crippled and impotent condition, and in a manner alienated from the celestial home. Its interior rational principle is asleep. It does not, however, entirely forget. Our *Ego*, the nobler essence, that which we are, is beyond this region of sublunary existence, immortal and imperishable. We have a superior consciousness, a spiritual sense which transcends physical sensibility, that awakens betimes from this dormant state, as if for the purpose of reminding us of the celestial life. Our every conception of the Good and the True is of this character. These memories, for such they are, now and then aroused, have often the vividness of present occurring. We even realise the force of the words of Schelling: "Such as you are you have been *somewhere* for ages."

It is true even in this world of sense that when we are in communion with a superior mind, we perceive ourselves passing after a manner beyond

ordinary limits of thought, and coming into the All. In the longing of the spirit after that state of perfect knowledge, purity and bliss, in which it once abode, there is somewhat of the same experience. We apprehend in a degree where we belong. We attain a deeper perception and consciousness of that which really is. We become more profoundly cognisant of the eternal laws and reasons of things, which are behind as well as mingled with the endless diversity of sensible phenomena. We then find the Highest to be indeed the nearest—to be closer than the air which we breathe or the thoughts which we are thinking.

"Each 'Lord, appear!' thy lips pronounce contains my 'Here am I!'
A special messenger I send beneath thine every sigh;
Thy love is but a girdle of the love I bear to thee,
And sleeping in thy 'Come, O Lord!' there lies 'Hear, child!' from me."

Many there are, however, who seem never to break the chain of illusion. They neither perceive nor understand anything which does not pertain to sensuous existence. It has been somewhat of a study with me whether the immortal principle in such persons does not return to the other world, as the rain-drops merge with the waters of the ocean, not having become fixed in any real identity. It must seem as though a being possessing immortality would cognise the fact, and that by parity of reasoning, whoever does not is not so endowed with an unending life. Nevertheless, it must be supposed that no capabilities or experiences are ever in vain. A dormant faculty may appear to be extinct, and so remain unrecognised by us, till under circumstances which we do not well understand, it shall be roused from its lethargy. No word or outflow of Divinity will return fruitless and abortive.

It may seem, however, to be a matter of wonderment to many, that if we have our origin in the eternal world, we appear, nevertheless, to have no distinct or positive memory of that fact. Whether we ever existed among men on earth, we believe rather than know for certainty. This does not prove anything adverse. It has been already remarked that the soul, upon entering the realm of conditioned existence, becomes as though asleep, unconscious of the celestial world, but dreaming, so to speak, of scenes in the material universe. The ancient sages used to teach that souls, before becoming incarnate, drank the water of Oblivion, and forgot the past, and in particular the occurrences in which they had borne a part. Several of these wise men, however, affirmed that they could recall to remembrance scenes and experiences of former life. I am disposed to regard this as possibly true. I have seen an infant that had never had a fall since birth, exhibit the liveliest apprehension of such an accident. Perhaps this terror was suggested by some invisible guardian, like the demon of Sôkratês, or was occasioned by some reminiscence of such an occurrence in an anterior term of life, which had been carried forward by the internal memory.

Unless we may suppose that cerebration takes place before birth, this was not possibly an action in which the brain participated. Meanwhile, the belief in a *karma* or influence from a former life or series of lives, affecting us for good or ill, has been universal, and had a place in every world-religion. "Who did sin," the disciples asked of Jesus, "this man or his parents, that he should be born blind?"

The forgetting of the former life and mode of being, whatever may have been the cause, appears to have been a necessary preparation for a new term of existence. Children in like manner forget the scenes and occurrences of the first months of infancy; and even become totally ignorant respecting their parents, if they are taken away from them during this period. It may be, however, that some had attained such purity in the previous lifetime, as to be able to preserve somewhat of the former memory. Pythagoras was without doubt of that character, and I would believe the same thing of the illustrious author of the *Phædrus*.

Although, however, the souls which have been prisoned in this world of sense have ceased to know about the higher life, and so are as though dead, yet this exile and death do not constitute a total separation from the heavenly world. They have some recollection of their former state of bliss, and yearn for a higher and nobler form of life. The interior spirit continues to live from above. It is no parentless evolution of physical nature, but a projection or outcome from the eternal region. Corruption is not an heir to incorruption, and that principle of our being which rises in glory, a spiritual essence, was first sown before it could experience any evolution. It was always immortal, without reference to the sensuous nature. Immortality has nothing to do with the accidents of the body. It is in no genuine sense a condition to be attained and enjoyed by reason of the phenomenal occurring of corporeal death. Such an immortality falls short of the eternal life, and is little better than a mirage of the imagination. The spiritual essence, the inward man that delights in the law of God, is the fountain of our life, and confers upon the corporeal structure all its significance. We are therefore immortal, imperishable and eternal, without becoming so. The supersensuous world is not a future state, in any essential sense of the term, but is now present and about every one of us. Our life in that sphere of being is by no means incompatible with living here on the earth. It is not necessary to lay the body aside in order to become free from the contamination of material existence. The soul may again turn toward its celestial source, contemplate it, and be at one with it, and so become spiritual and divine as partaking of Deity. Thus will it be delivered from the illusions of sense and the disturbances of passion which obscure its vision, and be exalted into the region of eternal truth, goodness and beauty. Here all things are perennial; the love of good,

the enthusiasm of the right and unselfish motive exceed all the limitations of time and space. Whoever attains these and lives in the exercise of them, possesses life beyond the veil which separates the visible world from the greater universe, and is in very fact a son of God dwelling in eternity.

We may now understand intelligently these sayings of Jesus: "He that heareth my word and believeth in him that sent me hath life eternal; and he cometh not into judgment, but hath passed out of death into life." "He that believeth in me, even though he may die, he shall live; and he that is alive and believeth in me shall not die." The *living* here denoted is that of angels and the various genera of celestial beings in the eternal world. Of that region this universe is but the effigy and shadow; and of the life of that world, this sublunary life is but the apparition and dream.

"The sense by which we lay hold on eternal life," says Fichte, "we acquire only by the renouncing and offering up of sense, and the aims of sense, to the law which claims our will alone and our acts;—by renouncing it with the conviction that to do so is reasonable and alone reasonable. With this renunciation of the earthly, the belief in the eternal first enters our soul, and stands isolated there, as the only stay, by which we can still sustain ourselves when we have relinquished everything else, as the only animating principle that still heaves our bosom and still inspires our life. Well was it said in the metaphors of a sacred doctrine that man must first die to the world and be born again in order to enter into the kingdom of God."

This sacred experience is prefigured by the meeting of the soul with its diviner self at the Bridge of Judgment. The resurrection from the dead to the life eternal is denoted. It is the converse of the apostasy or abandoning of the celestial home. The Ionic philosophers, after the custom of the sages of the farther East, designated it as the *metempsychosis*, which though usually interpreted as meaning the transplanting of the soul from one body to another, rather denotes the transformation from the sensuous and corporeal to the spiritual life. The Hebrew Psalmist gives the graphic description: "He brought me out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay; he set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings." The soul, having become immersed in the mire of sense, and lost sight of the celestial world, is brought again to the perception of the truth, and stands erect in its native divinity, ransomed and redeemed. It is now transfigured and changed into the image of the heavenly.

The resurrection is not to be understood as a restoration from physical accident. We can afford to disencumber this subject from the gross fancies and interpretations which originate in a sensuous conception. The dead who hear and obey the divine voice are not promised any renewed pulsation of arteries and stimulating of the nervous system, but a birth into

spiritual life. The fatal sting of death is taken away and the king of terrors is dethroned when we cease to wander from the right. The victory thus achieved relates to moral and not physical dissolution. "The body is dead through sin," says the great Apostle, "but the spirit lives through righteousness." "Ye are not in the flesh, but in the spirit." "You hath he quickened; ye are risen with him through the operation of faith." "God hath quickened us and both raised us up and made us sit in the heavenly places." These declarations shut us up to the direction: "Reckon ye also yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God."

We have no occasion for apprehension or perplexity in regard to a judgment of the last day. The form of speech is Asiatic and highly metaphorical. The event may be regarded by those whose mental purview is bounded by time as relating to some physical crisis like the consummation of terrestrial existence, or perhaps the end of life; but in the world of mind there are no such limitations. The day of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting, always at high noon, without sunrise or sunset; it has always been, it now is, and it will never cease to be. It is a "last day" to those alone whose life and thought are still involved in corporeal nature; it is a day of judgment to those only who love darkness rather than light, and are wrong-doers. But they who have attained the pure life and the true resurrection are living all the while in the divine, eternal day. They are in the heavenly places, in beatific communion with spirits and angels, and are endowed with the perceptions, faculties and energies which pertain to the life of the eternal world. We are vouchsafed the assurance that as we live in family, neighbourhood, and society upon the earth, we may likewise sustain analogous relations with those who dwell in the celestial region. The basis of this assurance exists in our own being, and we confirm it by living in charity and doing the right. "In all moral feeling," says Jacobi, "there is a presentiment of eternity."

The life which we live as inhabitants of the eternal world is in no sense a continuance of the life which we live upon the earth. It is not a form or mode of existench, but a quality of being. It has no part in any action which is not inspired by the consideration of a result. It consists solely of the moral essentials, love, virtue and goodness. It knows no going and coming as in a region of space; there are no words for divisible conditions in the language of the gods. We have no occasion to search for any one in the heavenly world. We are in and with those whom we love, and are permeated by them through all our being. We cognise rather than recognise them. There is no space or limit to the human mind, and hence our personality possesses indefinite extension over the world of spirit. The gladness of thought, the communion of love, the beatitude of service, the ecstasy of worship, the contemplation of the divine, make up the life

there; as they are felt and known here to be the highest of our employments.

The whole matter, however, transcends the sphere of common reasoning. It belongs to the universal faith which has been cherished alike by seers and sages. It pertains to the world of ideas, the prior realities which came with the spirit from the eternal home. Let no one, therefore, seek to intermeddle and exercise dominion over the faith and conduct of another in matters of the spiritual life. It may be our province to serve as guides and heralds of the eternal verities; but beyond that point each one must minister to himself. The truth, and not its exponent, will make us free. This liberty of the spirit, however, is no mere breaking of yokes and fetters, but an initiation and induction into the fullness of the divine life. We are not even made subject to the will of the Most High, but render to it a free obedience. Thus we are at one with the Divine Order which inspires and regulates the interior universe, and is supreme in all worlds. In this is *the* life eternal—being without change, participation of the Absolute Good. The celestial maiden, our pure law and inmost spirit conducts us onward, not only into Paradise, but to the very foot of the Celestial Throne.

WHAT ARE WE HERE FOR?

(Reprinted from "The Theosophist.")

The object of our existence here, and the work we are to do, could be better understood by looking into the general plan of the evolution of the Ego and its ultimate destiny. The Ego which started from its source (we cannot say when, because Time and Space are applicable to this our plane only) in a state of passive negative purity, has to pass through a series of existences and planes to undergo and exhaust the experiences of those planes. So it has come down through many planes of existences each more gross than the other, until we are on the physical plane, the grossest of all. This is the turning point of the evolutionary course, and from this begins a series of existences on planes each higher in point of spirituality than the preceding one, until the Egos return to the source from which they started, in a state of active perfection rich with the soul experiences gathered during so many lives. This is the course of evolution, and when well understood, we would see that the more we shorten our stay on each plane, exhausting the experiences of that plane in as short a time as we can, the sooner we attain our object (*i.e.*) merging into the source from which we issued.

Now to take our case into consideration: we are on this physical plane and have to exhaust its experiences. By exhausting the experiences, I mean to go personally through every form of existence, and select among the innumerable experiences of those that are concerned with the Permanent in man and which speed him on in the course of Evolution. The experience that the Ego takes with him during his various incarnations are only those connected with his Higher Self (*i.e.*), Sutratma. In doing this the Ego has to go through and understand the permanent experiences and discard the impermanent ones. And the latter being the majority, it is plain that there is greater destructive work than constructive. Now going through an experience can be done in two ways, either by undergoing it oneself or acquiring a determined conviction of its usefulness or otherwise. One does not know that poison causes death by tasting it himself and dying; he simply sees many suffering the consequences, and it being an immediate physical result, he is firmly convinced that he should not take poison, and he would not do so under any circumstances. But spiritual and moral results, good and bad, are not always immediate and visible, so it requires one to go through the most important of them to

realise their usefulness or otherwise. According to the law of Karma, when one is dragged from the middle path of duty by love or hatred, he is bound to that object until he sees that there is no use in loving that or hating this. Now when a man gets immodcrately fond of women, he is bound to them during so many incarnations that he gets disgusted and feels that there is no real pleasure in it; or when we shrink away from the sight of any loathsome physical disease or mental depravity, instead of pitying the object and trying to cure him of it, we are bound to the object until we are convinced that there is nothing really detestable in him. Hence we see that to obtain one experience one has to go through so many incarnations. The chief duty of an Ego while here is to go through the salient experiences, to know their bearing upon the Permanent, and to know the relation of one experience to another; also we should distinguish the soul experiences from the earthly ones and gradually mould our lives, so that we may have a majority of the highest experiences when we close our account after this life. This is the end and aim of our existence here, and every other thing is but accessory to it. The four Sadhanas: distinguishing between the permanent and the impermanent; the feeling of indifference to the pleasures of all the planes of existence; the cultivation of the active and the passive virtues; and the preponderance in our life of an unceasing active desire to free ourselves from this cycle of existences, all these are but the means to that end. Again, the bearing of the Yoga practice upon this, is as follows:—Yoga practice tends to purify and paralyse the body, so that the inner senses may be developed and enable him to work upon the next plane and go through the experiences. By that he obtains also another object, *i.e.*, by a knowledge of the relations of the astral plane he is able to know the relations of his karmic acts here, and hence to duly regulate his life here in such a way as to go through the experiences of this plane in as short a period of time as possible.

Let us now see what bearing Universal Brotherhood and unselfishly working for others, have upon the object to be attained.

To exhaust the experiences of this plane is to go individually through every form of existence and the innumerable varieties therein until we have gathered their experiences. Now taking the human kingdom, there are the distinctly marked divisions (*i.e.*), races. Again, there are sub-races and branch races. Again in each branch race, there are tribal varieties, and in them innumerable individuals. In one individual there are innumerable phases of character. Now, if one were to take an incarnation for every such experience, the number of incarnations on this earth during a round only would be beyond human calculation. There are seven such rounds on this chain, and this chain is only one of the solar system, and so on *ad infinitum*.

Universal Brotherhood furthers our end in this way. In this race, at this time, there are the nations—Hindu, European, &c. It is absolutely necessary that one should incarnate severally in these nations to get hold of the salient characteristics in each.

He cannot get the experiences of the European by being born a Hindu. But in the same nation there are so many varieties and species, that were one to go on incarnating in each to get hold of the characteristics, it will never end. So Universal Brotherhood or sympathy enables us to put ourselves in the place of others in joy and sorrow, and so experience what is passing in them at that time. This increases our experiences and so decreases the number of incarnations we should otherwise have to undergo. The wider our sympathies are extended, the greater is our sphere of experiences and the less our number of births here, till we are permeated with a feeling of Universal Sympathy, and, as it were, absorbed into the Universal Law of Harmony and Order.

I may as well say a few words about evils arising from selfishness. In addition to the tremendous evil above described, the selfish man in trying to share in the pleasure derived from others, but not in their sorrow, *i.e.*, shuts, as it were, the window into his soul through which these rays of sympathy enter. He offers a determined resistance to the natural course of the Law of Harmony and Sympathy, by which the strings at one heart respond to a corresponding vibration of joy or sorrow in the hearts of others. Every time he makes the wall between stronger, until an impenetrable barrier is thus raised. Meanwhile the feelings of sympathy in him for the sorrows of others become atrophied for want of use. But as misery preponderates in the lives of man, so even his ability to share in the joys of others become less and less, because those rays of sympathy cannot pierce the dark thick wall of selfishness raised around the person (good clairvoyants actually see it), till at last the person unable to sympathize with the joys of others, and finding no joy in himself, settles down into a permanent state of hypochondriasis, if he does not commit suicide before that.

So we see that universal sympathy and unselfish working for others tends not only to our own good, but also lightens the burdens of others and removes the thorns from their paths. And for allowing a free scope for the souls yearning to work in that line, but that could find no co-operation, has the broad platform of the Theosophical Society been instituted. It brings together individual earnest workers, and gives each a strength, being supported by the rest, that stimulates him to more active work.

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THEOSOPHY AND THE ALCOHOL QUESTION.

It is the charge of some of our opponents that the Theosophical Society owes part of its success to the skill with which it lays hold of, and causes to be in a measure identified with itself, certain collateral humanitarian questions. Of these the alcohol question is one. Within the Theosophical Society there is a large percentage of total abstainers, and it is to these that the following paper is addressed. For it is only right that these should be able to make out a good case for the attitude they assume on this question, a case grounded in part (as they think) on the Esoteric Philosophy. Putting on one side all the upper states of consciousness belonging to sleep and to deep meditation, it is clear that during normal waking life our consciousness is mainly limited to the brain-possibilities, and swayed by the bodily states. By means of the senses and the brain the Lower Manas is in relation with the outer world; the brain-cells are keys that unlock for us the chambers of our memory; to them come the *psychic* waves from the organs and cells of the body, waves that give rise in the consciousness of the Ego to the lower desires and emotions. Of these sensuous cognitions, and of these emotions is made up the whole consciousness of the animal, and, so far as he is an animal, the whole consciousness of man. These, complexly put together, compared, and generalised, mainly (and in the case of entire materialists, wholly) make up the matter of the reasoning consciousness. Other waves from the cells, *spiritual*, from their monadic consciousness, wholly super-physical, give rise in our consciousness to spiritual ideation; for in the bodily cells there is, beside their physical life with its desires, the one supreme life; beside Kama there is Buddhi. Thus from the most debased up to the most spiritual levels of consciousness we are fed by the cells of the body. Inasmuch as it is the aim of the true Theosophist to cultivate the upper at the expense of the lower consciousness, and inasmuch as both are, as it were, fed from the body, in some sense dependent for their activity on the waves from the planes of consciousness of the cell, we have to guard those cells: physically, that their physical consciousness may not in its rude intensity dim the finer light; morally, taking care that by unclean thought we do not soil them with a psychic grossness which in their irresponsibility they must subsequently cause to react upon us, for between them and the Ego there is equal action and reaction. With the physical aspect of the case we are

for this paper mainly concerned. We have to enquire what is the effect of alcohol upon the cell, whether its life is lengthened or shortened by the use of that substance, whether its effect upon our consciousness is altered for the better or worse, whether its avenues of communication with the brain are by alcohol cleared or choked.

Alcohol is a narcotic to every vital function, and never in any true way a *stimulant*. It is time that it ceased to receive the compliment of that name. We do not call fresh air "stimulants," nor a morning bath, nor food of any sort. We withhold the name from these, which *are* stimulants, and apply it specially, habitually, almost reverentially, to alcohol, which is not, but precisely the opposite. How then did it come to have that name? Partly because the primary effect of certain paralyses that it induces is the setting free here and there of locked up force which in its irregular departure sets up some local excitements; but mainly because of the *sensation of being stimulated* that it imparts, the sensation of added strength. But if this sensation be either falsely based, or due to the impending wasteful expenditure of *capital*, then the work done under the illusion of that sensation should, in consequence of succeeding reaction and physical bankruptcy, be finally less in quantity than that done under the uniform and constant expenditure of merely the working fund of life. This is the case, and experiment shows that the sense of added strength is really due to the addition to the working fund of the capital, and that in a short time this working fund sinks to an almost irreducible minimum so far as its availability for the purposes of life is concerned; for, instead of flowing out, it is flowing back from the frontier to replenish the exhausted reserve-forces of the interior. The experiments to which I refer here are those of Dr. Parkes, who caused three soldiers to undertake various kinds of sustained physical work, administering to them respectively, and in rotation, coffee, alcohol, and beef-tea. In all cases the recipient of the alcohol broke down first. Man starts his physical life with an astral generator (so far as the individual man is concerned) of vitality, set to generate and pour into the physical body a steady stream of vitality for a given length of time, a time which is determined by Karma. It is possible, and in this age usual, to die before the generator is worn out. The physical cells will only accommodate a moderate stream, and if by vice, by perpetual excitement, by want of sleep, or by the use of alcohol, the vital current is rendered too intense for them, they will wear down faster than they can build up, and ultimately physical death will occur before it was necessitated.

If we restrict the use of the word stimulant to that which *supplies the material* for an intensified expenditure of vitality, then the name must be absolutely withheld from alcohol. For it cannot play the *rôle* of stimulant without stimulating something; the power of bodily work, plant, animal,

or human growth ; the senses ; rapidity of nerve-conduction ; muscular contraction ; intellectual power ; morality. It is easy to show that it stimulates none of these, unless the word stimulation is made to mean the sudden wasting of stored energy which is unsupported by the addition of replacing material. As regards the mineral kingdom, if, as it seems probable, the assimilation of crystalline salts to form part of the vital substance of cells (as distinguished from mere interpenetration) is effected by their alteration from the crystalline to the colloid conditions, this is a process which we know to be reversed by alcohol, which plays thus an anti-vital part.

As regards the vegetable cell ; we know that if a series of nascent plants, say mustard-cress, be watered with water adulterated in various degrees with alcohol, the growth of such plants is inversely proportioned to the amount of alcohol in all cases.

As regards the animal cell ; we know from the experiment of administering to a series of puppies, water adulterated in varying degrees with alcohol, that their growth is inverse to the percentage of alcohol.

As regards the human cell ; we know that on the warmed stage of the microscope, the white cells of the blood in their serum, mixed with water, containing varying percentage of alcohol, are slow in their various movements in proportion to the amount of alcohol, and that they are killed by a very low percentage.

These various sets of experiments demonstrate the point as far as concerns (1) power of physical work of a sustained kind, (2) growth ; and they begin to make clear what is further to be shown, namely, that the ultimate effect of alcohol is to make the physical plane uninhabitable for those little lives whose presence in all cells constitutes their vitality, and which collectively comprise human, animal, and plant vitality. The human cell approaches the animal, that is, begins to accommodate elemental lives that are parallel with animals instead of man ; the animalised cell approaches the vegetable, and ultimately the vegetable sinks to the mineral, accommodating then only the lowest and most fixed units of elemental life. And as all the lives that make up the soul of the body of man, and are its animating essence, are dependant upon that habitation and consequent association with the Lower Manas for the stimulus to their evolution which alone they can get from man, it seems to follow that the taking of alcohol tends to become a crime against nature. We will take the cells that comprise the various tissues of the body in their order and examine the effect of alcohol upon them (1) blood cells, (2) muscle cells, (3) nerve cells and fibres, cerebral and other, (4) cells concerned with each of the senses.

1. Upon the white blood-cells we have already made a note. Alcohol lowers all their activities. They are the bearers on to the physical plane of the preservative soul of vitality, that is, of those high elemental lives which

make for the conservation of the body, which fight with, and in health destroy, the opposing lives whose activity constitutes disease. Death should not, perhaps, normally be due to disease of a marked or tangible kind, but to that general decline of function to which we do not ordinarily apply the term disease. They are the buffers between ourselves and death, giving their lives in our defence. The visible cell, floating in the blood-stream, is the body of one of these lives. With them, as with us, reincarnation is the law, for when the cell is destroyed in the conflict with disease the life therein is reborn in another. Our own death might be almost indefinitely postponed if we did not, by our own acts, interfere with and injure these little beings in their quiet and thankless task of constant self-sacrifice. Of these injuries the use of alcohol in ordinary life is one. It makes their conflict less potent, their movements less plastic, the products of their destruction more injurious (*e.g.*, uric acid with its rheumatic and gouty progeny, instead of urea) whilst at the same time, choking up the systemic emunctories for the elimination of those products.

2. The experiments (I think of Dr. Ridge) made upon muscular fibre suspended, freed from its nerve-fibres, in an atmosphere of alcohol vapour, and caused to contract by electricity, show that this contraction is impaired in power and sustention. The previously quoted experiments of Parks would in any case strongly suggest this conclusion. A muscle seems to be a system of electro-magnets, that is, of bodies which become magnets when in the aura of a circumfluent spiral electric current, the spiral being perhaps formed among the fibres of the connective tissues surrounding the muscle elements proper. Probably the effect of the alcohol is upon these last, preventing them in an increasing degree from conducting the current, restricting the area of action upon the body of the central will. The conservation of the body as a whole, and the harmonisation of action of its units, depend upon that subtle and continued stream of volition that is not present to the normal physical consciousness of man, which thus far only shines upon and gives rise to the rougher volitions concerned with gross movements. But man is a complete being on earth, only when, in full terrestrial consciousness, he has learned to take hold of and guide the enormous volume and power of the subtler magnetism that maintains his body as a cohesive whole in all its works. This is a practical aspect of that "learning of matter" and its forces for which he is here, and which, when learned by Yoga or in the normal course of evolution confer upon him the physical powers over matter (in and outside of his body) that belong to Adeptship. Such advance is apparently stopped by the use of alcohol.

3. Upon nerve-cells and fibres the ultimate action of alcohol is coagulation of their fluid elements, the increase of the low connective tissue

between them, and final destruction of their proper structure and consequent function. Nerve material would be classified for occult purposes into various systems, having their correspondences in consciousness respectively with the spiritual consciousness, the psycho-intellectual consciousness, and the animal consciousness. The student who would learn more of this would do well to consult H. P. B's. articles (in *Lucifer*, "Psychic and Noetic action;" particularly, in this connection, the second). The mass of our consciousness, while in a degree pervading the whole body, or perhaps more accurately, nervous system, has for each man a headquarters which is probably not exactly the same for any two. That is to say, inasmuch as each man's consciousness is predominatingly spiritual, or intellectual, or psychic, or animal, so it is more closely in touch with the radiations from one or another part of the nervous system. Occult physiology will never be understood by us, and the relations between the Lower Manas and the body will always be incomprehensible unless we keep constantly in view the fact of existence of the little conscious elements of life which are interposed as it were between our mind and body. On the one hand, they are the immediate actors upon, movers and maintainers of, the bodily cells whose soul and spirit they are, sometimes acting therein and thereon in accordance with our wills, much more often on their own account, or as we say automatically; on the other side of their being they receive impulses, volitions, and the general colour of their consciousness from the Lower Manas, reacting also thereafter upon the mind in accordance with what they have received formerly from it. Some of them belonging to the brain and heart are in relation with the strata of human consciousness that cannot be called *Lower* Manasic. *Normal* human embodied consciousness, then, tethered in its range from its highest to its lowest states to the various parts of the nervous system, is gravely affected in its quality by the taking of alcohol. Such a statement must be carefully limited to consciousness of the ordinary man, and not allowed to apply to the abnormally freed consciousness of the Occultist. In developing this statement we must bear in mind the double life of the cell, its two strata of consciousness. The life therein is on this plane a distinct unit. It has bodily purposes to carry out; it has to maintain its nutrition, to collect food, to receive and transmit many messages from other parts of the body. Its life as a unit is thus the life of an animal, intent on its own preservation. And as its consciousness is in close relation with the consciousness of the Lower Manas, who in saying, *e.g.*, "*I* am hungry," thoroughly identifies himself therewith, so in that very identity the Lower Manas tends to become also animal in nature. We know that as a rule the athlete, that is the man whose cells are in great vigour, is an animal man; and that in the invalid where the cells are greatly depressed in vitality and make few

appeals and weak to consciousness, the proper Manasic consciousness, freed from the animal contamination of the cells, rises higher and higher, and may ultimately reach a supremely spiritual condition. At death, of course, this always happens, and the high states of consciousness that supervene at death and culminate in Devachan are only possible because the cells are "dead," and make no interference with the Manas. But as this spiritual freedom was only attained at death and not during life, against the resistance of the cells, it is neither perfect nor lasting. There is, of course, at the other pole, the utterly depraved consciousness of the materialist and the completely animal man, who have absolutely, once and for all, asserted and made clear to themselves their entire identity with or inseparability from the body, and who therefore at the dissolution of the body suffer also the dissolution of the consciousness of that life. The other plane of consciousness of the cell-life is the purely divine or Buddhic which they enjoy not as units, but because they have their roots and real being in the divine life-tide of nature, and this consciousness is collective, too near the roots of being for individuality. It is only *human* consciousness that can return to this ocean and live therein as a unit. All lives, in emerging from this, have to develop the lower consciousness in matter and raise *this* by self-purification again to the divine. If, then, by the use of alcohol, a stream of vitality is made to rush out and increase for the time the animal life of the cells, it is clear that the Lower Manas, sharing and reflecting as it does that accentuated animal consciousness which the cells gain under that stimulus, must become increasingly animal, and we know that this is the case. In the rush of this lower life, it falls absolutely out of touch with the infinitely higher appeals that come to it from the higher life of the cell-lives on the plane of Buddhi, and so, falling out of touch with that plane entirely, it loses all sense of the Unity of Life, all perception of its relationship to its fellow-creatures, and all the humanities, charities, kindlinesses and self-sacrifices that come from the unconscious and conscious recognition of our oneness of being with our fellows. It becomes increasingly limited in its consciousness, self-centred, and animal. Note the process of intoxication, and say whether this is not true. In the descending scale the man may first become patriotic, which is the loss of the sense of the equal rights and importance of other nations, loss of the sense of justice towards them, though it seems hard to say that patriotism is a symptom of the first stage of drunkenness. Anyhow, it involves a loss of the sense of brotherhood toward other nations. Then comes a further narrowing of the area of consciousness, an increase of the personal self in the thought of the drunkard. He becomes more opinionated, more quarrelsome, thinks himself more important, more witty, stronger. That marks a further descent from that consciousness which feels for others. Then he loses touch altogether with

others, becomes brutal, first to his friends, afterwards to his family, a brutality which may end in murder. He has first lost his spirituality, that is his brotherhood; then his intellectuality, which is the mark of his humanity. He is only an animal. Then losing his animal powers of locomotion and expression, he becomes a vegetable, merely breathing, Lastly comes death. First the Lower Manas becomes incapable of sharing the Divine Life, and allies itself wholly with the flesh-life of the cells. Then the purely flesh life of the cells as a whole begins to fail to accommodate the proper life stream with which alone the Manas can associate itself, for it cannot associate itself with the individual life of the cells. With the decline of that human life-stream, the life of each cell takes on a separated being, and dissolution results. With each step of the cell-dissolution, lower and lower elementals occupy the cell as their body. Looking yet more closely at the three possible levels of human consciousness, the spiritual, the intellectual, and the animal, it is not difficult to perceive two levels at least in each of these, making, roughly speaking, six levels from the highest to the lowest, and to note that in the six the process of intoxication pares them away from the highest to the lowest. Among the spiritual, we have that universal consciousness that in its width, its compassion, and its comprehension almost obliterates for the Ego the distinction between himself and others. This is the first to go under the touch of alcohol. Then comes the plane of artistic inspiration, and this goes next. Of the intellectual levels, we have first those that are put on with difficulty, the result of self-made efforts in study and thought, the finest product and power of mature thinking. This departs early in intoxication and there is left only the common level of life. When this is wiped out there may yet remain an animal fondness for wife and children, but in time this, the sixth, is also cleaned away. If to all this it be objected that there have been artists who could not compose, thinkers who could not philosophise save under the inspiration of alcohol, the reply is, first that the stimulus it gives is very short; second, that under the influence of the rush of life that for a brief time it imparts, many impure products are swept out of the cell that would not have been there had it not been for the previous use of alcohol, and which the new dose in no long time infallibly again engenders. A deplorable Karma is that of the man who cannot bring his mental machinery into motion without alcohol. To some extent alcohol represents *the* temptation of the age, for our inability to realise ourselves as not the body, as apart from the body, make us dependent upon bodily health for our mental health and activity, and as none of us are ever in all respects well in body, we welcome and rejoice in the discharge of life into the bodily cell that alcohol produces.

4. The effect of alcohol upon the special cells that are concerned with

each of the senses is in line with what we should have expected. The eye becomes capable of reading small letterpress less easily, and requires to come to nearer range ; the ear distinguishes less easily two tones a fraction apart, a few vibrations apart ; the sense of taste, and presumably the sense of smell is a little dulled: the sense of touch is similarly affected, so that the points of a pair of compasses touching the palm must be a little further apart after than they were before the dose of alcohol to be perceived as two. Humanity thus far, in its fifth race on this globe, has but five senses, but in the coming ages that will cover the evolution of the two remaining races two further senses are to be developed, and are even now to be obtained by Yoga. If then, as the researches of Ridge and others demonstrate, a few minutes after the taking of a small dose of alcohol, all the senses are dulled in their accuracy of work, and if, as is the case, the same occurs with all the other systems of cells in the body, it is inevitably suggested that the same is true of the nascent senses that remain for development, and which are even now developing in some. The physical organs in the body which stand related to them as the ear is related to hearing, must be deadened and narcotised, and evolution thus stayed in its progress. The two senses are for the perception of the astral and spiritual essence of substance on this plane. The two physical organs in which they are rooted, are the home of elemental lives that belong to the astral and spiritual degrees of this physical plane, and reflect the knowledge or essences of this plane in their consciousness, and this knowledge or essence, reflected once again into human consciousness, becomes then part of human knowledge. But if by the taking of alcohol, or in other ways, we render those cells physically incapable of accommodating the lives, then we miss the power of getting the highest knowledge that is possible of the higher properties and possibilities of matter, knowledge for ever closed to the five senses, and therefore unattainable by science.

Now we are able after all this examination, to take a more comprehensive survey of the action of alcohol. We have seen that, by means of the cells of our bodies we are in relation with the lowest plane and seventh plane of universal substance, with what we call physical matter. By the five senses, the cells that compose them, or rather by the lives that inhabit them, we are cognisant of its physical nature ; by the sixth sense we are, or shall be, in relation with its astral nature, its prototypal nature, its real form ; and by the seventh sense we cognise its absolute reality, its spiritual laws and being. The lives that compose the fabric of the sheaths of the soul, from the physical upwards, mirror in their consciousness a little fragment of the domain of nature. The soul, self-consciously standing in the centre of the sheaths, gathers into itself, into its self-knowledge, all these rays from the lives under its survey and control, and thus has, if it will,

knowledge of every department of nature, all of which departments exist as it were in sample in its vestures. For it differs from the lives through, or from which it obtains knowledge, in that whilst they mirror only one spot or compartment each of the total field of nature, and are not each individually self-conscious, it can through them gather the whole field into self-conscious wisdom, being from the first the potential lord of nature.

The symbol of the tree is true here as in other places. The cells are the leaves. A few of these spring from one twig, and except indirectly by means of that twig they do not communicate with each other. A few twigs arise from one branchlet, and several branchlets from one branch, whilst all the branches converge to, pour their communications into and receive directions from one root. It is only in the root, the human Ego, that all the separate units are united under one chief. After the preliminary period that follows the taking of alcohol, the admirable marshalling under one general is done away with.

First the groups of cells act independently, all are flushed with blood and act incoherently each for himself, liver, heart, brain, etc. On the subjective side the various parts of the whole nature cease to act as a whole, as a rationally guided unit. The various passions and powers of the intellect go off each along its own track; the man becomes foolish, excited, lustful, quarrelsome. Lastly the ultimate cells cease to respond to any requirement of united action, and lacking a synthesising generalship, render movement impossible, while on the subjective side the thinking man is dissolved into his isolated thoughts and mental pictures which come vaguely, fleetingly, and utterly disconnectedly across the field of his consciousness. So the taking of alcohol is the undoing of evolution, and that knowledge of nature in its occult, astral and spiritual, and normal departments, which comes from the comparison and synthesising of the little atoms of knowledge in the consciousness of the various cells according to the department of nature to which their inhabiting lives belong, is done away with and rendered impossible. Intuition is stifled, and all the upper and finally lower departments of the soul. We have seen that according to the training we bestow upon the little lives whose bodies make up our body are they advanced or hindered in their evolution; if we are clean-thoughted, so will they be; if we are impure in mind, they get of that the impress with equal facility. And what we give them, they render back. When we sit quiet, negative, thinking of little or nothing, and an impure thought suddenly floats into the mind, apparently not of our own making, whence comes it, save from these cells where, somewhile before, we ourselves had planted it. If with alcohol we habitually stimulate the lower animal life and therefore consciousness of these cells, it is that which they will pour back into our minds at unguarded moments, and even at

times when we are trying to aspire. So, as I take it, the use of alcohol habitually is a bar to great progress. It is a bar to progress as to quality and as to quantity, for not only does it impair the activity of all the cells of all kinds, but, as might be expected, the length of life of the moderate drinker is less than that of the total abstainer.* But the man who dies under alcohol, slowly or quickly, dies by the wrong door. His vital sheath does not, as in normal death, slowly detach itself from the leaves of life backwards into their twigs, back to the branchlets, back to the branches, back at last to the root where dwells the observing and now knowing Ego, who taking into his quiet death-consciousness all that store of experience, passes with it to his rest. No, he dies outwards, from the root to the leaves, and the leaves die last, leaving little harvest to their owner, who does not enter into his inheritance. So far as concerns that life, he has unworthily died to the extent of his drunkenness or his moderation in the porch instead of the central chamber, died with the cells into which he has poured his life and with which he has unconsciously claimed and achieved identity. There are some who make the terrific and irremediable error of confusing that "knowing of matter" for which we are on earth with cultivation of the pleasures of lust and of the senses. They are at opposite poles of consciousness. The soul only begins to know matter, its real being, its secrets and its powers, when she recognises that she is the spectator of and not the sharer in its life. When the soul holds herself as wise spectator she has no longer pleasure in sensation. The essence of evolution is that the soul, for ages blinded in matter and thinking herself matter and form, shall at last detach itself, begin to attain Egoism and to say "I am spirit." And if, having in the process of nature obtained Egoism, recognised itself, and obtained will, it turns back from the dawn and says, fearing the hard path in front, "I will know matter," and so plunges again into the ignorance of the past without the irresponsibility of ignorance, it can but await its doom. And some, thinking wrongly that alcohol lengthens life, hold long life as in itself of value, forgetting that alcohol makes thought feeble, that it dilutes the contents of

* At Bradford district, among the Oddfellows the time sick per member is $13\frac{1}{2}$ days per annum; among the abstaining Rechabites it is 4 days: deaths among the former are 1 in 44, among the latter 1 in 141. At the Court of Foresters in Streatham there was an average of 152 members, of whom a quarter part were abstainers. This quarter part, however, drew but one-thirteenth of the sick-pay. The United Kingdom Temperance and General Provident Institution of London has two sections, one of 20,000 moderate drinkers (for the intemperate are not admitted), and the other of 10,000 total abstainers. In a certain five years they expected in the moderate section 3,450 death claims, and got them. In the abstaining section they expected 2,000 claims, and got 1,400. So 600 people are now living who would not be if they had been moderate drinkers. This, applying to one office of one city of one country can perhaps be more easily worked out for the world in imagination than statistically, but it is enough for our point.

the vessel of thinking life, and that length without breadth would at any rate be the best that could be said.

We can for a moment imperfectly image to ourselves the manners and grades of life upon earth as a succession of forms standing each upon its rung of a vast ladder, every form animated by the breath of one life, which as it passes up through all of them acquires with effort, pain, and death, a greater and greater delicacy and complexity. At the top it enters and ensouls man, becoming in him self-conscious, and through him tries to flower out into a perfection as much greater than he, as he than the reptile, and the reptile than the fungus. And as far up as man there is no hindrance to the great Will behind creation; it moves irresistably to its purpose. But in him arises an opposing force. He has the power and also the responsibility of moulding his own growth. What he expands into, he becomes by his own intention and aspiration. At the service of the soul of man is his brain, his instrument for the understanding of nature, the very last outcome and possibility of matter in finish and delicacy. This is the fabric among whose threads we pour the poison of alcohol, prompted by our worship at the shrine of sensation. And therewith a greater question arises in view, the question as to how far we are justified in accepting the pleasure of sensations which occupy our intellectual field and hinder thought and work. The life of entire self-sacrifice may be beyond us, but some lesser possibilities are surely ours. We may not be able absolutely to destroy all thought and wish for our own progress, voluntarily forgoing such progress as might take us out of the immediate common work in the Theosophical Society. There may in the back of our minds still be the selfish wish for personal growth in power and wisdom, but we can at least refuse such pleasures as interfere with *that* growth. That anyhow will be *something*.

HERBERT CORYN, F.T.S.

THE WORLD WE LIVE IN.

(A Lecture to the Adelphi Lodge T.S.)

"THE World we live in" seems a rather large order for discussion in one evening. We are so accustomed to think that we really do live in a vast world, a mighty world; or rising to the sublime height of utter verbal nonsense we say that we live in an *infinite* world, and having reduced infinity to the position of a quality of the finite we may well feel that there is no more to be said in that direction.

Then if we are morally inclined we sigh and think what a very wicked world we live in, and we wish to do something to make it a better world, and perhaps we turn social moralists and set to work in earnest to study other people's vices and faults, and then we denounce them and feel more moral than before, but still the wicked world continues wicked, and we feel very, very sad that it should be so. We are really very quaint when we are so moral.

Now when we are young and the life is hot and strong in us and hope is the guide of our imagination, and knowledge is small and experience an empty word: then the world is a beautiful world, a happy world, a world of love and life, and we feel that to live is to love, and to love is to be blessed, Then the animal in us (ever natural and sane) tries to lead us into the open path of simple happiness and pure love of life, and the mind is caught in the current of animal life and plunges into the stream, throwing the bright light of imagination over the simple joy of sensation and gilding with its magic power the pure form of pleasure; leads the soul "singing in its chrysalis of flesh" down the flowery paths of sense to the desert land that is bordered by the dark river of the unknown. Then a shadow falls upon the garden of flowers and the soul looks for the joy that led it on, and finds the dark melancholy figure of satiety which will never leave it now until that river is crossed. Then a struggle begins and the soul seeks to regain the gardens of sense that now are almost out of reach, but everywhere the same shadow falls, and the soul finding the fruit bitter to the taste curses the world it lives in and would die. Then the world is "hollow," an "illusion," a "snare," and so forth, and so on, and we are the "victims of cruel Fate" and many more strong phrases expressive of disappointment. Then man is indeed cast out of the Garden of Eden, and he knows that he is naked, the first step from the animal to the human stage has been taken. and there is no return until he can "regain the child state he has lost." At first the song of hope echoes faintly in his heart, and he seeks, and the

world is a land of exile, and he is a pilgrim as he wanders in the waste land that borders the dark river. But soon the song dies out in his heart and the mists of the waste places cloud his vision and he forgets the land of his birth, and the hope of his life, and the very purpose of his existence, and he would sleep and be at rest. But, though he does not recognise it, hope sings on and her voice awakens the dark messenger of Fate whom I called satiety, and who now appears to him as despair and drives him with a whip whose thongs are bitter thoughts, so that he knows no rest, and travels on simply to try and escape from thought. The world he lives in now is hell· Desire lives in him, and no means of satisfaction can he find, and every other dweller in hell also in the same manner, desires and craves he knows not what ; then the idea develops in these sufferers that some one of their number holds that for which he is seeking, and not knowing what they seek, they fight and take from one another that which they seem to possess, and fight with others to protect what they have gained, never stopping to enquire if the possession of these hard won things brings rest or happiness to themselves. And this world is the world of "civilisation" and "business," and in this hell there is to be found momentary oblivion and temporary reprieve from the pitiless scourge of thought. But a deeper hell may yet be reached, where the nature of these possessions is seen and where the voice of hope cannot reach, and only the constant scourging of the lash of bitter thought is felt and all the land is a barren waste. Here cynicism reigns supreme. There is nothing to strive for, all the fruits of the earth are filled with ashes, and we pour out the bitterness of our hearts in curses of the things we have striven and fought for, friendship, fame, virtue, liberty, all are gone.

At this stage of progress or degradation, of wisdom or imbecility, (whichever you please to call it) we call ourselves men and women of the world, we boast that we have no illusions, and infer that consequently we have nothing more to learn. This I think is pretty near the lowest hell, as it is a stage at which we must either pass on to fall into the "ladle of the button moulder" to be melted up again like the defective buttons, as described by Ibsen in his "Peer Gynt," and recommence the pilgrimage, or we must make a plunge in another direction and seek a new world. This would be impossible if hope were ever really dead. But I believe that hope is the internal recognition of some permanent truth, and this is at the root of all our dissatisfaction with things that are impermanent. Despair I take to be the dark side of that unknown of which hope is the light side. Perhaps we might call that unknown the Divine Wisdom which can balance the opposites and see the truth of hope and the truth of despair.

It is indeed remarkable that just as we cannot distinguish between the

sudden sensations of extreme heat and extreme cold, so hope and despair seem to drive mankind alike along a certain path. And then one begins to think that the hand that guides is ever the same, but now the path is smooth and now rough, and when we enjoy we say a friend is at hand, and when we suffer we say, " an enemy hath done this."

So we begin to see that the " World we live in " is really a name for our own mind, in which we do live, so long as we believe ourselves to be separate persons living in a world which is something separate from ourselves.

To say that the world we live in is a mere creation of our own fancy is to state a partial truth in an incomplete fashion, and to make an assertion which is contradicted by daily experience, for we find that others act upon and influence us and affect our conditions of life to an enormous extent.

So long as we look upon ourselves as separate from the people and things around us, so long must we admit that the world we live in is not *merely* the product of our own imagination ; unless we are willing to go a step further and say that we too are *mere* fictions of our own imagination. If we do this, we have only given the same qualification to the whole world and start again where we were before ; because, if *all* is *illusion*, then the converse must be equally true that *nothing* is *reality*. Now we may maintain that the one reality is nothing—but I doubt if these words convey more music to the mind than the rattle of dried peas in an empty can. So I would banish or at least discreetly pigeon-hole such cant phrases as all is vanity, all is illusion, there is nothing real but the true. These are more fit for silent meditation, as symbols for the concentration of our mind upon abstract subjects, than for practical use in daily life, unless indeed the practical purpose be to acquire a cheap reputation for inferior wisdom or cheap sanctity, a useful quality no doubt in promoting companies, or founding fraudulent benefit societies, and so on, but too vague and contradictory to be useful guides in life.

Thus we may say all is illusion, possession of property is but the fancied possession of what really does not exist. I, who know this, am therefore freed from the rules that guide others, and so can deal with these illusions without affecting the one reality ; and if convenient, I can convert my neighbour's illusion into an instrument of my will, and in fact, take his property without hurting the absolute truth or the one reality, and though this is not a carefully thought-out case, it is easy to see that a very abstract statement of principles can be made to serve almost any purpose, unless supplemented by some further philosophy than is contained in these cant phrases.

Cant phrases are the tombs of dead ideas, and only serve as landmarks to show where passed a grand mind—and wherever one finds a number of

tombstones together, one will also expect to find decaying corpses or dry bones not far off. And it is so with cant phrases and creeds. The spook of the departed idea may linger, but the spirit has passed on, and must be sought in the green fields and forests, and across mountain and moor, where life is free, and love unbound, and the sun shines.

We are all more or less agreed on one point, which is, that there is something not quite right with the world we live in, even though when things are at their best and brightest we may go so far as to say that we have nothing to grumble at; still, we seldom put our happiest moments in the present, the golden age is either in the past or in the future, while for a great part of the world, as far as I can see, life is little more than just bearable, occasionally not even that. Now why is this so?

The famous struggle for existence is not alone to blame. For if we look at those animals which live by preying upon one another, they do not seem to be unhappy when they are not actually being killed by their enemies. While men and women, who have never known what it is to want a day's food or clothing, are so miserable that they hate themselves and all around them.

I fancy that if the struggle for existence were the absolute rule of life in the human kingdom, the life of men would be much happier, much stronger, and much freer than it is now, more elemental and less human: for the rule of life would be known to all, and there would be no dishonesty possible; there would be no pity, because there would be no recognition of any claim to consideration, and so the simple, elemental state would be reached; there would be no right and wrong, simply desire and the power to gratify it. This would be the state described by Regin, the dwarf, in the old Saga.

"Fair was the earth whilesome,
Ere the short-lived thralls of the Gods amidst its dales were come:—
And how were we worse than the Gods, though maybe we lived not as long?
Yet no weight of memory maimed us; nor aught we knew of wrong.
What felt our souls of shaming, what knew our hearts of love?
We did and undid at pleasure, and repented naught thereof."

And perhaps this description is a true tradition of an earlier race before the gods made the men folk the short-lived thralls of the gods. It seems to correspond to the middle of what we call the Atlantean period when the giants of Lemuria were past, and the all-powerful Atlantean race was breaking up and the new spirit was working in the world to produce this fifth race, just as the changing which will prepare the way for the sixth race is now showing itself. The gods are said to fashion the grief and the gold. And Reidman, the dwarf king, when he has snared the three gods, taunts them, and asks Hœnir:—

"Come, Hœnir, fashion now
My heart for love and for hope, that the fear in my body may grow,
That I may grieve and be sorry, that the ruth may arise in me,
As thou dealtst with the first of men-folk, when a master-smith thou wouldst be."

This story of the gods is very fine. The three gods who are principally concerned with the making of man as we know him, seem to express the three great forces acting in man; there is the Allfather Odin, the Supreme Lord, or inmost Self of Man, and there is the God of Hope and Love,

"Hœnir, the utter blameless, who wrought the Hope of Man."

And then the dark Spirit of Evil, a necessary and ever present power in his evolution.

"Loki, the world's begrudger, who maketh all labour vain."

Thus showing the trinity of Hope the creator, Hate the destroyer, and the Supreme the preserver.

But when the gods came down and busied themselves with the earth and breathed their spirit into the men-forms that till then had lived free from hope and knowing no regret,—then the sorrow began, and love and pity, remorse and fear followed, and the creatures that walked the earth were neither gods nor the dwarfs of old, but a vacillating, weak race, mingling virtue and vice, and tangling the right and the wrong, some straining to reach the gods and some trying to do the deeds of the dwarfs, and then treachery and hypocrisy and respectability came into fashion; and now the noble lives of the god-like ones serve as models on which to mould the mask of the fraud and the canting hypocrite, and the world is so stained with deceit that we can hardly think of our own best friends without suspecting them of falsity in their highest efforts, and the weak lose faith in any goodness or hope of progress at all. This is the state of transition, the turning point as it is often called, and the place of trial, and so on. The next stage may be an approach to the god stage, when again the simple law of life will be clear to all, and as Signy says to Sigurd:—

'There, as thou drawest thy sword, thou shall look on the days that were,
And the foul shall still seem foul, and the fair shall still seem fair;
But thy wit shall then be awakened, and thou shalt know indeed,
Why the brave man's spear is broken and his war shield fails at need,
Why the loving is unbeloved, and the just man falls from his state,
Why the liar gains in a day what the soothfast strives for late.
Yea, and thy deeds shalt thou know, and great shall thy gladness be,
Like a picture all of gold thy life days thou shalt see;
And know that thou too wert a God to abide through the hurry and haste;
A God in the golden hall, a God on the rain-swept waste,
A God in the battle triumphant, a God on the heap of the slain,
And thy hope shall arise and blossom, and thy love be quickened again.
By the side of the sons of Odin thou shalt fashion a tale to be told,
In the halls of the happy Baldur, nor there shall the tale grow old,
Of the days before the changing e'en those that over us pass."*

* Morris's "Sigurd the Volsung."

This seems to describe a future state of development, and if possible for one, then necessarily in time for all, unless there be failures in the efforts of humanities as well as of individuals.

But is this state really future in the sense of being not yet existent ? I think not. I believe that we necessarily call *present* that state which holds our consciousness, and that other states of development are only past or future to us, in proportion as they are perceived by us. I believe that the primeval savage or neolithic man dear to modern speculators, is with us to-day, and that the mighty god-like heroes are not far off, but in our very midst, and it depends on our own development whether, living still upon this earth, we are in the neolithic, the savage, the civilized, or the man-god state. I believe these states are all present in each one of us, and that we live in all these worlds.

Sometimes when in one state, say the civilised state, a person becomes conscious of the neolithic state, and if he keeps the two states clear, he says he has had a vision, and if not others say he is mad, and he is placed in confinement, as it tends to inconvenience to mix up these periods or states.

Are we alive when we sleep and dream ? and in what world are we then living ? For if one considers the sleep state, it seems that it must be either life or death, that is either conscious or unconscious. Of course we usually talk about being unconscious when the body fails to record any mental activity, and assume that there is no mental activity if none is recorded by the physical apparatus ; but this is a pure assumption, and the experience of persons who indulge in prophetic dreams and who are acquainted with the states of trance, is opposed to this view. It seems to me far more reasonable to suppose that there is never any break in consciousness ; for to me man is a centre of consciousness, and I cannot understand consciousness which is not conscious. But I can easily see that only a certain range of experiences can be recorded or expressed by the physical apparatus, and that other experiences can only be recorded by other instruments more or less subtle, and perhaps while the physical instrument rests in sleep or in trance, the conscious entity is employing itself in activity in its other instruments or bodies, and being in that state perhaps forgetful of this waking state, lives its life as strongly and as really as it does when returning to the physical body and taking up that form of expression which is possible on the physical plane.

So the world we live in is indeed a large order, as I said at first, and yet strangely enough it is very small, so small, indeed, that I hardly like to think of it after indulging in thoughts of the possibilities within us of indefinitely extended life and activity. But even if we accept this earth of ours as a serious affair, and the pretty maps that are made for us by

persons of fancy and imagination, assisted by travellers' stories and some measurements, as really representing something in nature, how absurdly little do we each one know of it, a few views of bits of places and things liberally filled in by imagination, and all a matter of fancy or memory, for without fancy and memory we are limited to what is actually before our eyes. We perhaps hardly realize how entirely we live in anticipation and recollection, for before we have seen an object, that is, before the mind has recorded one impression, another is on the screen ready for inspection, and the appearance of reality which we take as an attribute of this world, is a theory which we gradually build up by repeating similar experiences until we accept them as real.

What is the world in which we live? For the most part it is a sphere with one inhabitant, the self. If you think of it you will see that the world is always a sphere of dimensions with self in the centre. The thinker sends out his perception across the unseen and unknown, and when he meets the object of perception, it is always to him pictured on the wall of his thought sphere. This is the picture gallery of his world. Now it is a very curious fact that if we try to think of the next room, and then of some place we are acquainted with at a great distance, there is no difference in the time taken to reach the picture in either case, and when seen the picture is always on the wall or limit of our thought sphere.

We all know that in the matter of vision with the physical eye the picture is thrown on the retina of the eye, and then examined by the thinker who reads this very small and flat picture as a three dimensional arrangement with a certain scale of measurement, based on results gained by experiments made in childhood by the aid of sight and touch. Let us remember this, that if the ordinary theory of sight be correct we do not see distance or size, but all pictures are the same size and distance, which is simply the size of the retina and the distance of the thinker from the retina, all else is guess based upon experiment and reason.

The same thing appears to happen in thought, and we thus live inside a sphere which we people with our thoughts. For when an impression reaches us through any of our perceptive faculties we place it on the screen of our mind and look at it, and then decide that it represents this or that state of the unknown outside, and as it is placed on the boundary wall of our consciousness we cannot get beyond it, and so are come to take these pictures for realities, and live in our little world of images, constantly occupying ourselves with looking over our stock and rearranging and sorting the pictures so as to make believe we are busy.

Gradually, however, it dawns upon us that this is a very hollow world, and we begin to yearn for the outside, and then we find that so long as we look upon these mind pictures as realities, we cannot get outside our little

world, for we shut ourselves in with these walls of our own making. Then how to get out of our cramped condition? If we cannot go out, then let us try to go within and observe our own mind, and control its wanderings. Then we find that the mind is indeed the creator of its own illusions, and realising thus that things are at any rate not only what they seem, we see that they may be altogether different, and our world may extend indefinitely with added or altered powers of observation and perception. Then, if we take the Theosophic teachings as to the world being all life, and every particle composed of lives, each one a model, more or less imperfectly developed, of the whole, we may find our world infinitely more interesting, and own position in it more satisfactory: for being ourselves life and having bodies made up of lives reflecting the original basic idea in every particle, we see how intimately we are related to all around us, whether human or mineral, spiritual or material. Thus our possibilities of knowledge become as wide as the universe, for by knowledge of the model we may see the plan of the whole. And by learning the laws of our own being we may learn the laws of the world we live in; we no longer feel really isolated when we know that our bodies are but the forms through which pass continuous streams of life, interpenetrating all other bodies; and our minds in like manner are hotels in which beings, which we call thoughts, take a momentary lodging and pass to other minds, better or worse for the treatment we may have given them. Then we begin to see that we are not obliged to accept as a lodger every dirty and disreputable ruffian of a thought that chooses to claim admittance, and we see the possibility of becoming masters of our own minds.

But you will say, what does all this lead us to, what is the practical application of it all? Yes, let us be practical, I like to be practical.

Well, in the first place, if the nature of the world we live in is determined by the condition of our own mind, and we are not satisfied with its state, then by all means let us change it. But be practical, don't go meddling with other people's morals, because perhaps they too are creations of your own fancy, but go to work and alter the mind in which all your world is pictured. Now, by this I do not mean that you are to take your body and isolate it from other bodies, and worry it with tricks and experiments; just guide it along and take care of it until you can make a better, and don't blame your body for the vices of your mind; the act of the body is only the dead thought cast out of the mind; the mind is the creator, and must be trained, and a troublesome business it is, very! It would be so much pleasanter to reform the world by killing all the people that get in our way; but unfortunately we have tried that and failed, because we are not strong enough to destroy all opposition and to live alone. So we have to fall back on the painful and distressing method of controlling our

own minds. And then as we are practical we look for a good method, this entails forming some working theories of life and of our own nature, and of our relations to the world around us.

In this task we are helped by the teachers who have founded philosophies, religions, and ethical systems, and they all agree in recommending altruism, which is decidedly unattractive for personal use. Again, one thinks how much better it would be if we were to teach altruism to others, that really does make one feel better. But to practise it, no it is not reasonable to bother about other people when you want to improve yourself. And yet if one does make an experiment in that direction, it is odd how different one feels.

Then it is necessary to learn why this very trying path should be adopted, and then we study and find teachings as to the real unity of all things, and that people and things are all masks which cover the same consciousness which looks out of these windows at its own appearances. And then one sees that altruism or brotherhood is only an effort to realise a fact in nature and the biggest step that can be taken towards enlarging our own conscious existence or ignoring the world we live in. It is a simple thing, and therefore enormously difficult for us in our present state, which, as I have tried to suggest, is not a simple one. And therefore we all fail to act in an altruistic or brotherly fashion. Those who begin to practise it really soon pass out of the ordinary state in which most of us live, and we look after them and long to follow, and fail in the most ridiculous fashion. We are in this difficulty, that we set before us as the first step that which is the ultimate goal, I imagine, and therefore our failure should not distress us, for the effort, if real, is all the success we can hope for now and all we need trouble about. Our efforts are the seeds we sow, and the sower is not yet the reaper. This symbol of the sower is familiar to us in many forms, and one of the finest versions is in the Norse epic of "Sigurd," or rather in *Brynhild's Book of Wisdom* it runs thus :—

"Be wise! 'tis a marvel of words and a mock for the fool and the blind.
Be wise! and cherish thine hope in the freshness of the days
And scatter its seed abroad in the field of the people's praise;
Then fair shall it fall in the furrow and some the earth shall speed,
And the sons of men shall marvel at the blossom of the deed.
And some the earth shall speed not, nay rather the winds of Heaven
Shall waft it away from thy longing, then a gift to the gods thou hast given.
And a tree for the roof and the wall in the house of the hope that shall be,
Though it seem our very sorrow and the grief of me and thee."*

R. Machell.

* William Morris's *Sigurd the Volsung*.

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THE LANGUAGE OF SYMBOLS.

In attempting to write on symbolism, I speedily discovered that in selecting one of the most beautiful and one of the most suggestive departments of Theosophical research, I had also selected one of the most difficult, one of the most extensive, and one of the most elusive. For while the language of symbols is a language which we all of us employ in our daily life, however unconsciously, it is also that language which has been pre-eminently utilised for purposes of concealment. And yet the language which has been used for concealing occult truths has also been used for preserving them—preserving them for the use of those who can raise the veil in which they have been shrouded, who can learn the language in which they have been recorded, and who can take unto themselves the knowledge which they have won.

It would indeed be hard to overestimate the importance of symbolism and its study. For a symbol to be a symbol it must faithfully represent that which it is intended to portray—it must be a real picture with a very real message for him who hath eyes to see what it would teach. And our occult literature is rich in symbolism, the records of antiquity are rich in symbolism. We find it around us on every side. It speaks to us from out the forgotten ages of India, from its temples, its mountain sides, its rock-hewn caverns. From Egypt how rich a harvest we reap, from wherever men have reached out after the unknown, from wherever men have felt and learned the secrets of themselves and of the Universe, which they dared not, or could not, express in words. Nor is symbolism the language of the occult in the far past alone. Occultism has not died, nor has it slumbered at any time, nor in any country, since the great Masters of antiquity set athrill the wires which were meant to vibrate throughout the ages. The Masters of Wisdom have not at any time cherished the East to the exclusion of the West.

Occult knowledge is not the heritage of the East nor of the West, but of all humanity, and in this our research into the mystery of the ages and into the language in which it is recorded, we shall not labour in vain if we look also into the West, into this Europe in which we live, for it too has had its wise men, who were the servants of Masters, and they too have told the world-old story in the world-old language of symbols. The star which rises in the East passes also into the western heavens, nor does its beauty wane in the western sky. If we are unable to see its splendour, we may at most confess that the light shineth in darkness and the darkness comprehendeth it not. And thus the Occultism which is in the West has

also its wealth of symbolism, which conceals from the unworthy and which teaches to the worthy those occult truths which were and which are and which will be evermore.

A study of symbols implies also a study of emblems, for the latter is a combination of the former. As Kenneth Mackenzie says in his *Royal Masonic Cyclopædia*, an emblem

"comprises a larger series of thoughts than a symbol, which may be said rather to illustrate some single, special idea. An emblem is a picture or sign representing principles, or a series of principles, recognisable by those who have received certain instructions."

The same authority goes on to say—

"All esoteric societies have made use of emblems and symbols, such as the Pythagorean Society, the Eleusinian, the Hermetic Brethren of Egypt, the Rosicrucians, and the Freemasons. Many of these emblems it is not proper to divulge to the general eye, and a very minute difference may make the emblem or symbol differ widely in its meaning. The magical sigillae, being founded on certain principles of numbers, partake of this character, and although monstrous or ridiculous in the eyes of the uninstructed, convey a whole body of doctrine to those who have been trained to recognise them."

Now let us see if we can arrive, to any extent at all, at the logical basis which underlies a symbol. A symbol, then, as we have seen, is "a visible picture or signs representing an idea." But *why* should any visible sign represent an idea? Ideas we know, and signs we know, but why should there be any connection between the two other than an arbitrary connection, imposed for the convenience and by the necessities of men? Let us then at once admit that very many forms which we call symbolic are purely arbitrary.

We see a certain form, and that form calls up certain ideas *because* we have mutually agreed that such forms shall represent such ideas. Such forms appear to me to be not *strictly* symbols at all. As a perfect illustration of the purely arbitrary or false symbol, let us take the forms used in any system of shorthand. Here we have a system which is in no way based upon any logical connection between the form and the idea. The system here is purely arbitrary, and not, as I conceive it, a true symbol at all. What this true connection is between form and idea which constitutes a pure symbol, we will presently try to ascertain. Let me now seek for an illustration of a symbol which, having a pure origin, has, in the minds of men, become dissociated from its true meaning. We cannot select a better illustration than that of the Cross. Every student of Theosophy knows the occult meaning of this symbol. To such an one, this particular form calls up some, at any rate, of the ideas which properly belong to it, but this is not so universally at the present, still less so has it been in the immediate past. To the Crusader, it became the symbol of hatred of those

who were unworthily in possession of the holiest spot on earth; to the Saracens it was the symbol of the hordes of white invaders who swept over the countries of the East; to the Inquisitor it was the symbol of a jealous god who required at his hands the extermination of the heretic and the unbeliever; to the Jew it was the sign of an impiously claimed Messiahship, and to-day, of what is it the symbol? It is the sign of a body of creed and dogma which, its supporters tell us, is destined to subdue the world and to exalt the nations of the West, as the pioneers and the teachers of humanity. To so many ideas then, and to how many others, has this simple symbol been made to correspond. The soldiers of Constantine fought under its shadow as under the wing of the living God, it has roused whole nations to madness, before it millions of knees have pressed the ground, in its name the world has run red with blood, and by its power the soul of the saint has arisen even unto the footstool of God. If such is then the power of a symbol diverted, what must be the potency of the true symbol which is based upon the laws of being.

We have already seen that a symbol is the picture of an idea, and we have already asked ourselves, in what way it is possible to represent an idea pictorially, and what we really mean by saying that any form can logically correspond with an idea, and whether there can be any such correspondence other than an arbitrary and a convenient one. The reply is that there may be such a correspondence, logical and scientific, in no way arbitrary, and very often in no way convenient.

We are doubtless all acquainted with the occult dogma of the unity o the Universe, which means that the infinity of differentiations which we see around us, are not independent differentiations, but are mutually dependent one upon another, that on their various planes, they are emanations one from another, the same force, proceeding from the source of all, moulding matter, through infinite combinations, into the plan of the divine ideal conception. There is no atom in the Universe which does not reflect the whole; there is no plane, or sub-plane, which has not been emanated from above, and which does not in turn emanate its correspondence, and from this arises the great occult teaching of the law of correspondence—this reflection by every part, of every part—this correspondence of everything below with something above. Thus we ourselves are pictures of the whole Universe, having that within us which corresponds to everything external to us. Man, septenary in his nature, corresponds to every other septenary in the Universe; every law which we learn of the visible Universe around us is the key and the explanation of some corresponding law in the invisible Universe; every law of the Universe unfolds a law of our own being.

A symbol is then the pictorial representation of an idea, that is to say it is the correspondence on the plane of form to an idea on the plane of

ideas. It is an idea concreted into a form. There can exist no idea which has not its corresponding form, no idea which has not its corresponding colour, no idea which has not its corresponding sound. Every colour, every sound, every form, every idea represents all the others and implies all the others to him who is able to understand them truly, *because* sound and colour and form and idea are logically and scientifically connected. Let me try and show that this is actually the case. We are probably all familiar with certain experiments which have recently been tried as to the optical effect of music on certain sensitives. It has been found that every note of music or every combination of notes produces on these sensitives the impression of a colour, and there are indeed very few who will not find that sounds do indeed produce a conception of colour. Here then, we find the plane of sound seeking out, as it were, its own correspondences on the plane of colour, and producing a conception of such colour. Now let us endeavour to find a still more comprehensive illustration.

Music produces mental ideas in all of us. Some music makes us sad, some makes us joyful, some is sensuous in its effects, and some is the reverse. Now, imagine that we have so arranged a drum-head, or other suitable surface, on which we have scattered fine sand, that it shall receive the vibrations from an orchestra or any musical instrument. We shall find that if we perform the experiment carefully, the sand assumes certain forms, grouping itself into shapes. A still more pronounced effect may be obtained by drawing a violin bow across the rim of the drum. Here then we have a distinct correspondence between form and sound. And now to go a step further, let us suppose that the sound which has produced these forms is of such a nature as to produce a mental idea, say an idea of solemnity, of melancholy, or of joyousness. Here then we have a mental idea corresponding to a form and a sound. And now in order to get the final correspondence let us suppose that the person in whom the mental idea is produced by the music, is one of those numerous sensitives to whom a colour is suggested by a sound. We then have a mental idea and its correspondence with a sound, a colour and a form; in other words, we have produced a true symbol of the mental idea in question, although of course a *sound* does not enter into a pictorial representation.

Now, I think I have made apparent my own conception of the nature of a true and scientific symbol. The illustrations I have used are necessarily rough ones, but I think they accurately show that this correspondence between the various kingdoms of Nature does actually exist, and it requires no great penetration to perceive the extraordinary importance of symbolism, and the uses to which it may be put. I will refer again to that point later on.

In far away forgotten ages when the gods ruled over men, and spiritual insight had not been closed, the correspondences between ideas and forms were the natural and obvious methods to be followed, and here, I believe, were the origins of writing. If we turn to the *Sepher Yetzirah or the Kabalistic Book of Formation* we shall there find that each letter in the Hebrew alphabet corresponds to a mental conception, corresponding also to a number; it is the pictorial symbol of the metaphysical meaning and significance of that number, which is therefore allied to the mental conception which the letter represents. This same system may be applied to the Sanskrit alphabet, and possibly with a still greater accuracy, but I use the Hebrew as being more familiar. Every alphabet has without doubt suffered to a greater or less extent from the universal departure from and forgetfulness of original types; but I have in my own mind no sort of doubt that originally every letter was a strictly accurate pictorial symbol of a simple idea. A word composed of single letters would then become an emblem, as composed of a number of symbols, and the meaning of such letters and such words would not depend upon an arbitrary significance, but would be obvious and manifest to every eye.

And thus we are able to some extent to understand why, as Kenneth Mackenzie says, certain symbols and emblems belonging to the ancient occult societies were not permitted to be shown to the uninitiated, because they did actually in themselves constitute an initiation, inasmuch as they were the expression in the world of form, of occult secrets which it was not lawful to divulge. Note what Mdme. Blavatsky has said in *The Secret Doctrine*, that certain teachings were conveyed only at initiation,

"And that every student had to record them in corresponding symbols, drawn out of his own mind, and examined later by his Master, before they were finally accepted. Thus was created in time the Chinese alphabet, as, before that, the hieratic symbols were fixed upon in old Egypt. In the Chinese language, which is only a little less ancient than the Egyptian alphabet of Thoth, every word has its corresponding symbol, conveying the word needed in a pictorial form."

Explaining thus the origin of symbology, the authoress continues :—

"It becomes easy to understand how Nature herself could have taught primeval mankind, even without the help of its primeval instructors, the first principles of a numerical and geometrical symbol language. Hence one finds numbers and figures used as an expression and a record of thought in every archaic symbolical Scripture. They are ever the same, with only certain variations growing out of the first figures. Thus the evolution and correlation of the mysteries of Kosmos, of its growth and development, were first recorded in geometrical charges of shape."

Ideas and states of consciousness, corresponding then, as they do, with sound, colour, and form, it must be fairly inferable that it is only normal consciousness that can be accurately expressed by these means. There

are states of consciousness stretching from the normal away up to the ideal and spiritual; there are colours and sounds which fail to impress themselves upon our sensuous organisms. Arguing from the known to the unknown, we may fairly assume that abnormal states of consciousness correspond with these higher colours and sounds in the same way as normal consciousness corresponds to the sounds, colours and forms cognised by us upon this plane; with these, however, we cannot now very well deal, as we cannot construct or deal with a symbol expressing any higher state of consciousness than that to which we can ourselves attain *except* in a speculative and hypothetical way. Symbols which profess to do this are attempts at approximation and as such have their own value.

What is then the method of study to be adopted in relation to symbols and towards emblems? Is it not evident that the more clearly we understand the correspondences between the departments of Nature, the more readily shall we be able to understand the significance of our symbols, and the material for such study is nearer to our hands than might perhaps be imagined. We are living in a world of form and colour. The material universe around appears to us by form and colour, but not by the objects of material sensation is our consciousness in any way bounded, for every complex form, every colour and combination of colour is an open book to him who can read the language in which that wondrous book is written. Why has the lily its own form and colour, and the colour and form of the rose, why are they different? Because the forces which have produced the two are different forces, manifesting differently upon this plane and, by the circumstances of that manifestation, disclosing and revealing their own nature to all who will look, and upon this plane we have manifestation in infinite complexity, but the forces which thus manifest have not originated upon this plane. We have form and colour of every complexity, because the manifesting forces are complex, but they have not originated on this plane, but manifesting here, they bear us lessons from the, to us, unmanifested. "As above, so below." There is no simple flower of the hedge, which by colour and form and scent may not enable us, by the power of its symbology, to pass away from this material plane, and to know and to feel something of the Titan forces which have moulded the worlds and have made them what they are, for these same forces have moulded the flower, and there is no characteristic of that flower which is not, in very truth, the impress and the signature of a cosmic force. Hence a great amount of teaching may then be hidden in the eastern lotus or in the red rose, for have they not, in common with all that exists, a lineage back into the ages, upward to the very parent of all.

The knowledge of symbology is the knowledge of cosmic law. Great principles may be taught, but the details must be worked out, and he for

whom the world of symbolism is thrown open will find that though he lives upon the physical and is surrounded by it, the spiritual world is around him and within him. His consciousness is in it, and the wisdom of the gods is his heritage.

There is, then, no lack of the material for any research, nor of the enlightenment which is necessary. If the world in which we live is to us a material world only, it is because we look on it with material eyes. It is an unreal world, an illusive world, a world of Maya, we are told by one who knows not the mysteries of Maya. It is indeed unreal, it is indeed Maya, *because* it is a symbolic world, but it is none the less a true and beautiful and real symbol of that which is above, of that which is eternal. Our environment is what we will to make it. Our world is a symbol of the Universe upon every plane. We are free to look at it from whatever aspect we will. To him whose consciousness rises ever upward, all which he sees is spiritual symbology ; he lives in a spiritual atmosphere ; there is no whisper of the trees, no form which meets his vision which does not transport him upward and away from the symbol, ever onward into the real and the eternal. This is, then, the study of symbolism—to lay hold of the form and of the appearance, that thereby we may raise ourselves to that which causes both.

It is in the processes of Nature, reflecting hereby downward from plane to plane, that we find the most perfect symbols, complex though they are, caused by the united operations of many laws. Man confines usually his symbology to geometry and colours, pictorial representations at any rate, and everything may thus be expressed accurately and logically up to those planes where form is no more. How then may we study these symbols—artificial and often approximate ?

First and foremost by studying the inner meaning of numbers, and the workings of numbers on the material planes, or the laws which govern the periodicity of Nature. Every force has its corresponding number, and every pure force may be expressed by a geometric symbol, and every composite force by an emblem. You will remember that Pythagoras admitted no pupil to his occult school who was not conversant with geometry and with music. Madame Blavatsky has said somewhere that Nature geometrizes in all her operations.

An emblem then, to him who can read it wisely, may not only represent natural forces, but also the way in which they may be manipulated. Man is the microcosm of the macrocosm. He contains within himself every force which is to be found outside of himself. Any symbol which represents a fact or a force in Nature is also a symbol of man, for man is the universe, viewed, as it were, in a camera obscura, and thus is it that in every occult school, there are symbols which must not be seen except by

the initiated, symbols which illustrate the secret workings of forces, symbols which represent the great forces in the universe and in man himself. Before passing on to the final remarks I have to make, let me once more emphasize my own conviction that the study of symbology is the most fruitful method of learning the "Secret Doctrine of the Ages;" pursued in the right way, it is the most effective means of raising consciousness away from the illusive into the spiritual, because the material thereby *ceases* to restrain and to cramp the consciousness, it becomes *truly* unreal, truly Mayavic, a kaleidoscopic symbol which no longer darkens, but is itself a light which shines with ever-increasing radiance, illuminating the road to emancipation.

Religion is then truly symbology, or at any rate is comprehensive of symbology. The world has not yet reached that point at which it can dispense with a visible and concrete faith; for a long time yet it will worship that which is outside of itself. The world creates its own gods and bows down unto them and the world's gods are the world's half-grown ideals. What then is it that the world needs as a religion? It needs a system which shall answer the cravings of mankind, which shall supply a nourishment from the time when the human soul gropes after the unknown, until it steps out of the shadows into the light, and I believe that to fill this need—to anything approaching a general extent—we shall have to invoke the aid of symbology. Verbal teaching, however logical it may be, however *true* it may be, will attract the few; but it will leave the many out in the cold. When we look around at the religious thought and the anti-religious thought of to-day, what do we find? We find that the waves of religious revival which began at the Reformation as a reaction against the mental tyranny and the senseless formalism of Rome, has reached its height, and has long been on the ebb. And mark what that Reformation was. It was an abandonment of the method which sought to enforce dogma by an appeal to the senses, and for this it substituted an equally cruel dogma without that effectual support. Had it abandoned the sensuous method for a religious arbitration of pure reason it would have been a worthy effort and one deserving of all respect—although it would have failed. But while it emancipated the mind of man from one tyranny, it was but to hand it over to another, and to another which knew not how to preserve its sway, which knew not how to picture what it fain would teach. And so to-day, the faith which would be simple, the faith which its adherents proudly boast can be comprised in one Biblical text, has lost its hold upon mankind and is tossed hither and thither upon the receding tide.

And those who have made its cause their own are full of perplexity

and equally full of expedients. They ask themselves why it is that what they are pleased to call "religion" is losing its hold upon the people, why it is that the churches are empty and the preachers preach to empty pews, Full they are indeed of expedients and of explanations, but their cause must ever dwindle and their hold upon popular affection wane, until they see and acknowledge that religion is *not* simple, that it is vast and reaches from earth unto heaven, and that it cannot be told in words but by symbols only, that it cannot be received through the ears alone, and spiritual lessons will reach the inner man more readily and more certainly through the former than through the latter.

And if we examine the one faith which to-day is endeavouring, however blindly, to express itself by symbology—I mean the Catholic, we find an increasing power, instead of a diminishing. We see here that creed and authority, altogether unable to stand alone, may yet somewhat resist the desintegrating force of to-day if they be strengthened by a symbolism, spectacular and aural, which whispers to every man some faint suggestions of possible individual evolution, of the unspeakable mysteries which surround him and which appeal to him from his cradle to his grave.

Popular religion must be spectacular and symbolical if it is ever to regain its hold in the West. Look back into the past, learn what we can of the old mystery plays, the great religious dramas of the ancient world. Here every spectator found what he wanted and what he needed, whatever the point of his own evolution. Here he saw dramatised the great forces of nature, the history of the world, the influence of the heavenly bodies; and although he was taught no creed and no dogma, he *was* taught how to wonder, he *was* made to feel that the visible world around him was but the cloak and the symbol of that which lay beyond out of sight.

If to-day were to see a revival of the mystic drama, it would be rewarded with a success past all anticipation—mystic drama on a large, if simple scale, rich with an accurate symbology, adorned with extensive and faithful ritual. For these things themselves call forth the devotion and the faith of men—not because they are sensuous in the ordinary acceptation of the term—but because they can be made actually to correspond with the unseen realities, because they may be true symbols.

We shall not, and we cannot, pass away from this plane of consciousness until we have fulfilled that purpose which brought us here. We cannot turn away with earth's lessons unlearned and the problems of matter unsolved. The path of progress lies not in making of the material Universe our adversary, barring the path to spiritual wisdom. Our environment is not the concealer, but the illuminator.

S. G. P. Coryn.

ON THE HIGHER ASPECT OF THEOSOPHIC STUDIES.

By Mohini M. Chatterji.

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The study of Theosophy, in which we are engaged, is in its character unique. The Esoteric Science, which is but another name for Theosophy, is at once a complete system of Physics, Ethics, and Metaphysics, demanding the devotion of all the faculties of man for its proper comprehension. Unlike those departments of knowledge which usually occupy attention, it directly deals with the great problem of happiness, a happiness which is complete and eternal. The ultimate value of all effort is the production of happiness, and objects excite our interest in so far as we believe them to be conducive to that great and ultimate consummation of existence—happiness. Thus it will be seen that Theosophy, claiming, as it does, to be the science of happiness, must embrace within itself all objects of human interest. In fact it must be omniscience itself. The definition here attempted is, no doubt, infinite in extension, rendering every claimant to a complete knowledge of it worthy of supreme contempt and ridicule, or, perhaps, even unworthy of that. One thing, however, is certain : the Great Science of Supreme Knowledge, as it is called in the East, is the science of supreme bliss and the art of acquiring it. As a science it recognizes the direction in which our highest faculties perceive the unfoldment of existence to be the direction of happiness, and looks upon all divergence from that direction as productive of unhappiness. As an art it naturally concerns itself most with the objects of our highest interest—ourselfs (it is necessary to adopt this form for the plural in defiance of grammar), and attacks the problem of happiness from their standpoint. These selfs, or as they are technically called, personal egos or personalities, are candidates for happiness, and therefore entitled to special consideration. It is needless to discuss here the contention which is sometimes heard that action, life, or existence is possible without a tendency towards happiness. Even a superficial examination will show that while pursuing apparently an unpleasant object, the man's real motive is still a desire for happiness. The author of the Upanishads shows great wisdom when he asks : "Who would have moved or who would have lived if happiness did not pervade all space ?"

The universally admitted relations of the personal ego to objects, usually regarded as external by reason of their non-identity with the self, must be recognized before any scheme can be formulated or means devised

for the acquirement of happiness. This part of the inquiry is confined to the domain of what is commonly, though empirically, called positive knowledge, and is physical; it is conducted by means of physical senses.

Having found the object to be made happy in the self, it becomes necessary to examine its nature, so as to discover how to make it happy. This branch of the inquiry, which is metaphysical, must be pursued with the aid of what may be called super-physical senses or higher intellection. Ordinarily we find all actions in life, proceeding upon a system of trial and error, seek to attain that happiness in which hope promises unchanging enjoyment and rest. But as the investigation into the true elements of happiness advances, a very important fact becomes apparent from our conception of time. We see that the personality, the aspirant for happiness, has itself such a characteristic as to be unable to exist without change in consciousness, and that exist it must. That which is, can never absolutely cease to be; no relationship can be legitimately postulated between a thing and its utter negation. Therefore the scheme of happiness, which the personality sets up in ignorance of its own nature, must be given up for its true happiness. In order to be truly happy the personality has to realize its own perpetual changefulness, and the result of such realization will be the surrender of the desire for the permanence of any particular state of its existence, a desire springing from ignorance of its own nature. When this ignorance is dispelled and the personality conforms itself to its own natural law of change, the character of the ego is so completely altered as to render the personality, to all intents and purposes, extinct; to mark the difference of state the entity is then called an individuality. It is not within the scope of this paper to discuss the nature of the existence of the individuality during the time the personality lasts, or strictly speaking, engages attention. Suffice it to say, that if one could survey the universe from the standpoint of eternity there would be no change, but everything would appear present, changeless and everlasting. But such a state can never be realised. The only eternity that exists is an eternity of change. Change alone is permanent. Forgetful of this, our personalities build up schemes of happiness in which the desire for the permanence of some particular state occupies a prominent position. As a consequence we bring pain upon ourselves when that desire meets with inevitable disappointment. A thorough realization, therefore, of the perpetual mutability of existence is essentially necessary for that happiness which is most perfect. To be supremely happy we must renounce all desire for happiness as the result of our work, but find it in the work itself.

This being concluded, the next step is to know our work. A proper examination of the nature of change, the law embodied in the personality aspiring to happiness, furnishes this knowledge as the highest faculties of

each project their searching light upon the massive darkness of what is to be as involved in what was and what is. Examining the true nature of our consciousness, we find that the great cause of pain and suffering is the personality itself, or, in other words, the great interest we feel in ourselves under the conviction of their separateness and opposition to other selfs. But the changefulness of the personality necessitates the existence of a permanent basis; and its separateness implies an underlying entity. This permanent basis must not, however, be considered a distinct entity. It is merely a state which has no more existence without change than change has without it. The more the personality realizes this permanence, this state of unity of all personalities, with which, in its present state, it feels such an opposition, the greater does its happiness become. For at each step of this realization the limitations imposed by the personality upon itself diminish in number and generate happiness. The effort to realize the ideal of Universal Brotherhood,—the emotional counterpart of the consciousness of unity which underlies the diverse forms of manifestation,—is usually known as the practice of morality. As the work of ethical evolution proceeds, the personality, which produces the consciousness of opposition of self and selfs, slackens its bonds and expands until it loses itself. The presence of opposition produces pain, which disappears in proportion as its true cause, the feeling of separateness, disappears; happiness grows with the growth of more permanent interests, and reaches its consummation when the "dewdrop slips into the shining sea," and the personality destroying its limitations merges in the all and loses its name. The peaks of perfection that the glorified individuality then begins to scale are far beyond the ken of mortal eyes. It never indeed loses "the glory of going on and still to be."

The path, however, by which this truth—this happiness—is realized, is not the same for all. The very fact that one personality is not another shows that each has a peculiar path of its own. No man is a superfluity in the Universe. The existence of the humblest human creature is not without a reason. A contrary supposition involves the assumption of omniscience, and is tantamount to a denial of the existence of reason itself. Each man, therefore, has a right to a perfect liberty of conscience, and no man is entitled to judge his fellow man. One's opinions are one's own, but one is not justified in imposing them on others. A neglect of this rule has a tendency to transform the whole of the human race into multiple images of a single individual, which must necessarily produce pain by its opposition to the natural law which underlies the diversity of manifestation. Nothing in Nature can be annihilated, and all attempts to achieve the impossible must produce unhappiness. Leave the meanest individual to enjoy his birthright-liberty of conscience. When another's acts cross

our path of duty and offend our sense of fitness and propriety we have a right to condemn the deed and endeavour to neutralise its evil effects, but it is wrong to shut our hearts against the doer; he is entitled to all the pity that is in our nature. For by the Law of Karma

> The false tongue dooms its lie; the creeping thief
> And spoiler rob, to render.

The law of Karma is the true order of our personal experience, as seen in the light of that mode of Nature's manifestation, commonly called Causation. That which is cannot cease to be. But it cannot remain in a state of permanence, for that would destroy the idea of succession, which is inseparably connected with existence. Our acts, therefore, live in their effects or subsequent forms. Until we can remove all material desires from our acts they will always necessitate material effects and produce rein carnations. It will be out of place in the present paper, which deals but with the practical aspect of our studies, to elucidate the Law of Karma and Reincarnation, or to meet even the principal objections raised against it. But attention is to be drawn to the fact that this Law offers a satisfactory explanation of the apparent injustices of life. We find around us not only pain and suffering but also moral excellence and depravity, forced upon individuals by circumstances over which they seem to have no control. No amount of speculation or dogmatism will furnish a clue to this anomaly so long as the above-mentioned Law remains unrecognized. Exception is taken to this Law on the ground that it is repugnant to justice that a man should experience the consequences of a prior act without preserving the memory of that act. It is hardly necessary to point out that this line of argument is based upon the assumption that the word justice, as applied to the working of natural laws, has the same meaning as the justice demanded by us in intercourse between man and man with their limited knowledge and selfish motives. Is a man, who is struck down by a disease, ever told the precise moment and circumstances when he received the germs of his malady? The justice of Nature is vindicated by the undisturbed sway of the law of Causation. If *you* suffer there must be a reason for it, and that reason must have some connection with *you*, otherwise it would not have produced *your* suffering. It should not, however, be supposed that the cause of suffering is here sought to be connected with the present form of you, your personality, the aggregate unity of a certain bundle of experiences, that personality being in fact but the form which your old self has assumed under the operation of self-generated causes, which are the progenitors of your present suffering and enjoyment. "Ye suffer from yourselves;" "that which ye sow, ye reap."

From the considerations, so briefly urged above, it will be obvious how wrong it is to entertain resentful feelings for evil done to ourselves. We

must be indifferent to it and pursue our path of duty : the evil experienced is the outcome of our own previous deeds. No power in heaven or on earth can, by a moment's duration, prolong or shorten the term of our suffering or enjoyment. The sum-total of human happiness will receive considerable addition if unswerving allegiance is given to this law, which alone can furnish a true and scientific basis of Ethics. Our Ethical notions, however, cannot be fixed and permanent, because the personality in which they inhere is itself changeable. The morality of a Polynesian savage will be converted into its opposite when he is changed into a civilized man. The same law also obtains in the domains of Physics and Metaphysics. What is Metaphysics to-day will be Physics to-morrow, as the right of now will be wrong of then. This truth, nevertheless, remains constant, that there will be always something unknown with which Metaphysics will concern itself, and which Ethics will demand to have brought within the grasp of Physics—the science of objectivity. There dominates throughout the whole range of existence the eternal struggle to convert Metaphysics into Physics, and Ethics is the power that fights. Any scheme of life or happiness that neglects one and enthrones the other of these will always defeat its own end. Physics without Metaphysics is empiricism ; Metaphysics without Physics is dogmatism ; and Ethics by itself is superstition. The harmonious combination of these three elements forms what is called Theosophy, Wisdom-Religion, or Esoteric Science. The study of this Great Science leads to a proper development of all the different faculties, the synthetic unity of which is the man. Physics requires the cultivation of the intellect. Metaphysics can be comprehended only by the development of the intuitive, or purely rational, faculties, while the emotional nature is expanded by Ethics. The feeling of reverential awe which we have for what we call the spiritual is produced by the combination of the metaphysical and ethical faculties. Metaphysics recognizes the true nature of consciousness, which Ethics, acting through the emotions, forces us to realize. This impelling conviction produces the feeling of awe for the subjective side of nature, and makes it sacred.

Objection is sometimes taken to Theosophy because it is not new. The logical connection between novelty and truth is, however, not easy to discover. If Theosophy is the Divine Wisdom which is the Science of Divine Bliss, and if happiness is the tendency of all existence, there must be Theosophy whenever there is metaphysical faculty in man to contemplate problems that lie deep in his nature. Novelty is an attribute which has never been claimed for our doctrines. But at the same time it must be recognized that a truth is the richer for having passed through a larger number of minds. It is the realization of the truth that we seek, and in this great task we accept help from each other's experience ; no statement

is authoritative but has to be accepted or rejected according to the dictates of the individual judgment. Abstract truths are like mathematical formulæ : the underlying principles must first be understood and afterward facility acquired in their application, and it is no detraction from the value of mathematics that some of its results can be accomplished by empiric rules.

The Great Science is the Science of Eternal Life, the contemplation of which causes the present life to assume its true proportions. Misconception of the true value of the existence we now lead shrouds from view the permanent basis which underlies all changes of form, and has on the one hand led some to sink into the condition of Tennyson's St. Simon Stylites, and on the other produced Epicurean Corporealism. A right understanding of the subject shows, however, the worth as well as the worthlessness of this existence, which at once imprisons us and gives us liberty. It is but a small link in an unending catena of changes—it is but a drop in the ocean ; but still it is a link and a drop. Our happiness entirely depends upon a correct estimate of the value of life. Ignorance is painful, and it is immaterial whether that ignorance begets an over-estimate of the importance of life or the opposite. The great delusion of belief in an absolute existence outside the Cosmos produces a perfect paralysis of the present life and all the misery consequent thereupon, while the over-estimate of life ends in sensuality and bigotry. This over-estimate proceeds from two distinct causes, both equally dangerous : Corporealism, which cannot conceive of any existence dissociated from the present body ; and certain forms of dogmatic religion which supplement this erring, miserable life of humanity by an eternity of existence, the nature of which depends on causes generated in finite time. The pleasures of this life appear in gigantic proportions to a votary of the former system, and dogmatic morality becomes the omnipotent ruler of the so-called religious man.

But the only eternity we recognize is an eternity of change. This life is only one out of the numberless patterns which the ceaseless motion of the kaleidoscope of existence produces. The contemplation of this great fact of our nature broadens our view of life, and helps us to realize present existence in its true light. As we penetrate further into details, the realization of the harmony of being grows upon us in strength, and the darkening medium of ignorance loses its density.

The fragments of Esoteric cosmogony contained in Theosophical literature now before the world carry us a long way towards estimating the true worth of life. This teaching must, however, for most minds in our age, rank as Metaphysics, appealing for sanction to the human reason, until the practice of Ethics makes it capable of realization as Physics, a task already accomplished by some individuals. But the practicability of con-

verting Metaphysical concepts into Physical facts by the help of Ethics must not be lost sight of.

A mere intellectual study of this system of Metaphysics is no doubt productive of great good, but at the same time it is to be observed that the best result can be achieved only by its practical application to life and conduct, or, to translate an Eastern phrase, by constant sitting beside it—assiduity in its etymological sense. An effort to realize the immense tract of time during which the course of human evolution has been traced by the above-mentioned fragments makes the mind dizzy at first, but in the course of the process, when even a shadowy comprehension of the truth is obtained, the factitious importance with which ignorance invests each fleeting phase of existence disappears and leaves earth-life to take its proper place in the endless manifestation of being through which we pass.

Taking the present objective life itself, we find it to be like a note in music, which when sounded must inevitably produce its third and fifth, and then return into itself in the higher octave. When a unit of consciousness, called a human entity, coursing along the present curve of objective evolution, reaches the furthest point of that curve and turns in a different direction, the phenomenon of death takes place. Death marks the point of comparative no motion or unconsciousness. Of course absolute unconsciousness has no existence in a universe, which is itself a grand consciousness. At death the unit of consciousness begins to disappear into the subjective side of existence. It is obvious that the rate of motion will be affected by forces tending in an opposite direction. In other words, an entity which generates material inclinations, is retarded in its progress heavenward, to use a popular expression, by those inclinations in proportion to their intensity. This state of conflict is rightly termed in the East, Kama-loka, or the World of Desires. It corresponds to the Purgatory as understood by some schools of Christian theology. The duration of the Kama-loka state depends upon the relative intensity of the material and spiritual inclinations of the personality. This state succeeding, as it does, the earth-life, is the nearest to it, and therefore the first which meets a psychic. The direction in which the living psychic moves being opposite to that of the retiring entity, he gets of it but a retrospective glimpse, and reflects such of its thoughts and emotions as are of the earth earthy. We must not forget that in the view of life taken in this paper, the spiritual is closely connected with what is ordinarily called the abstract, and is something higher than what is considered moral by the work-a-day world. It need not, therefore, excite surprise to find men, considered good on earth, passing through the state of Kama-loka. Those alone who, during a long course of unselfish life have shed every atom of material craving, are able to overleap Kama-loka altogether, while in the case of the generality its

duration varies from some hours to a great many years. It will, I believe, be confirmed by the experience of those who investigate the character of existence in Kama-loka, that men dying at ripe old age with the satisfaction of having accomplished all life's labours, very rarely manifest through mediums. This gives some indication of the true nature of Kama-loka entities.

Let us return to the analogy between human life and a musical note. A man possessed of a peculiarly constituted sense of hearing, which prevents his taking cognizance of any other overtone besides the third of the original note, will never suspect the existence of the fifth and the octave. Thus the untrained psychic or medium, whose purview is confined to Kama-loka, cannot obtain any idea of the higher states. It is a matter of regret that transcendental Metaphysics should not be more generally studied, as that alone, in the absence of the incomparable clairvoyance of the trained seer, can fathom the mysteries of spiritual life. To some minds the manifestations of the séance-room are conclusive and satisfactory proofs of the immortality of man, but the illegitimate nature of the process of reasoning which yields such a result is plain to all metaphysical thinkers. It is not our purpose to enter into further discussion of a subject, whose importance demands separate treatment. For the present, it will suffice to remark that an examination of the state of consciousness known as Kama-loka does not give a clue to a right understanding of the higher existence, even though the examiner be assisted by the testimony of entities which have passed into that state. What amount of reliance is to be placed upon the information obtained through mediums regarding the mysteries of true spiritual life? In answering this question we must remember that there is nothing in the mere fact of death which would invest an otherwise incompetent person with authority to pronounce the last word upon spiritual matters. Problems which are amenable to reason are as much within the grasp of an embodied as of a disembodied spirit. We do not attach any value to a man's belief that his brain is made of wax or molten lead, although the brain is his and not ours. Nor do we throw our Euclid overboard on the assurance of some one that at the North Pole the three angles of a triangle are not equal to two right angles.

The secrets of the soul will never be revealed to sense. The physical man can only cognize astral existence, the borderland between the physical and the spiritual. It will thus be seen that the information obtained through Spiritualistic mediums will never enable us to solve the problems of the true spiritual life. In the meantime there is a grave moral objection to the practice of Spiritualism, which all its services against the fatal progress of materialism do not remove. Concluding upon insufficient data obtained by communication with the astral or semi-ethereal phase of existence that the

personality is eternal, one is sure to take an exaggerated view of the present life, and of the personality manifested in it. As a consequence, the very life-stream of true Spiritual development, which is but another name for liberation from the bondage of personality, is poisoned at its source. The immorality of Spiritualism thus lies on a higher plane, and is, therefore, the more reprehensible. It is more pernicious to implant in a man's mind a germ of thought which expands into a upas tree of evil, than to rob or even murder him. From another point of view it is evident that the entity communicated with by a medium, is very seriously injured by being turned away from the higher life towards which it is pressing. The injury thus resulting is liable to be underrated by reason of our want of familiarity with the operation of causes on superphysical planes of existence. The illustration above cited as to the effects of thought-energy will throw some iight on the subject. A tendency being set up in a Kama-loka will be prolonged to a much greater extent than will be readily admitted. The evil effects on the medium himself of his astral intercourse are quite manifest. The surrender of will is the surrender of duty, and treason to manhood.

We now enter upon a consideration of the truly spiritual counterpart of our life on earth, a state called Devachan in recent Theosophical teachings. In this state the entity lives in the highest spiritual manifestation of its personality on earth, and in the realization of all its hopes and aspirations. No communication, other than subjective, is possible with such a purified being. While the spiritual life of an individual is unfolding itself in Devachan, sympathetic souls on earth feel the vivifying and spiritualizing influence of that unfoldment, and translate it into their physical lives according to their respective spiritual development. Whenever an individual on earth is enabled by his highly spiritual life to live upon the plane of soul, he can consciously receive the influx of spiritual energy thus showered upon the world, and trace it to its source. True spiritual communication must be of a subjective character. The pure spiritual being, even while on earth, vibrates in unison with some glorified predecessor, a good man in life and goodness in death. It will thus be seen that good men, freed from the limitations of the flesh, become inspiring influences to their race, and so remain for a period immeasurably greater than the span of their lives on earth, before making another descent into objective life. But the state of Devachan is, from a higher stand-point, still a very selfish state. Although the spiritual energy evolved by an inhabitant of Devachan is a factor in the spiritual development of the race, yet the entity, wanting in the element of self-consciousness (as all entities are in Kama-loka and Devachan, when left to themselves), cannot be credited with unselfishness any more than the tree can be styled unselfish for affording a shelter to the weary passer-by. In each fact of consciousness there are two elements, the

mere perception and the reflective consciousness of that perception. When I see a thing there are two facts present in my mind; the fact of seeing the thing and the fact that *I* see it. When the higher thoughts and aspirations are realized by an entity in Devachan, it is in the position of one who is lost in an enjoyment, the intensity and keenness of which prevent this reflective consciousness or self-consciousness. Truly unselfish beings do not enter into the state of Devachan, but obtain immediate reincarnation so long as there is any possibility left for their further development on earth, after which they pass into the state of Nirvana, as Sakyamuni has done, and become the true spiritual pabulum for those who thirst and hunger after righteousness.

This is the doctrine against which the charge of selfishness is sometimes very hastily preferred, but the extravagant injustice of the accusation is manifest on the least thoughtful consideration. If happiness is to be the supremely important object of all effort, our adversaries urge, where is that spirit of self-sacrifice which alone can open the portals of the highest good? Such a contention can live only in the shadow cast by the ignorance of the true nature of self-sacrifice and the highest good. Neither good nor evil has any absolute existence. No act performed in a finite period of time can ensure results which will retain their power of producing happiness or unhappiness to the actor through all eternity. The same reasons which condemn eternal punishment as absurd, also sap the foundation of eternal bliss, as the consequence of energy operating during a finite period of time. It is not here maintained that even the feeblest flash of energy is destructible, but that owing to the changefulness of the personal ego the manifestations of a cause lose in time their unhappy or happy character as regards the unit of consciousness which originally produced the cause. Happiness alone is the constant factor and the final criterion to which all our conceptions of goodness must be referred. But what is the highest happiness? It is an utter renunciation of all desire for happiness, and a supreme satisfaction in the performance of one's work, which in reality is one's nature, purified from egoism. Selfishness, or egoism, as it is the greatest enemy of happiness, is the greatest evil. Applying this principle to self-sacrifice as ordinarily understood, we find that by itself it is neither good nor bad, but may be either, according to the motive which underlies it. The surrender of self to duty is the only sacrifice of self; under all other circumstances there will be self-slaughter, not self-sacrifice. A subtle and dangerous form of selfishness is often found mixed up with many acts commonly regarded as self-sacrificial. Consciousness of personality is the great evil, and that evil is not removed by the way in which the consciousness is manifested. When one rushes on death with the determination of giving up *self*, no matter with what object, there is still a consciousness of

self which is being given up, and consequently the object is selfish. Self-forgetfulness in the performance of duty, which reaches its consummation when duty and nature become one, is the true self-sacrifice. So long as there is an opposition between self and other selfs, the self has not been sacrificed. Self-sacrifice is a perpetual effort towards the attainment of that goal where, to quote the words of a great Indian teacher, the "All is filled by the self, as the world is filled by water at the great universal cataclysm." It often involves a greater act of sacrifice to live on and perform one's duty than to be relieved from it by the approach of death. Thus the ideal sacrifice of self, is to be found exemplified in the life of Buddha, who, for our sakes lived on. If by confounding a thing with its polar opposite, this is considered selfishness; so be it.

We have dwelt upon a few facts regarding Kama-loka and Devachan, not with the intention of expounding the subject, but to demonstrate its practical value. We have attempted to show how a careful study of Esoteric Doctrine, with earnestness of purpose and sincerity of heart, must needs impress us with the immense importance of cultivating the spiritual side of our character on earth, as something higher than mere blind submission to conventional morality, which is based upon a recognition of human selfishness. Further, from this study we derive the lesson of universal toleration and brotherly love. And above all, it teaches us the sublime doctrine of Renunciation and unselfish devotion to the cause of Humanity, a doctrine which the greatest teachers of all time and every country have preached and realized, which the great good men of every age and every land have worshipped and followed, and which it is the greatest glory of mankind to have the ability to receive.

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CONSCIOUSNESS.

By R. B. HOLT.

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CONSCIOUSNESS.

THERE are very few who have not at some time or other asked themselves, "How is it that I know, and what are these successive stages of perception that we summarise as life?" Madame Blavatsky recommends us to bring all things down to states of consciousness. That is, to strip mask after mask from each phenomenon, till at last we realise that our knowledge of things is all that they are, or can be, to us; nay, that the Soul itself is nothing beyond thinking, *i.e.*, evolved "consciousness," and that Chidakasam, the field of consciousness, is the only one permanent condition in the Universe. Clearly then, a right understanding of consciousness or "the power by which things realise themselves" is a matter of primary importance to everyone. Therefore, without pretending to any authority, I will endeavour to place before you what leading occultists say on this interesting subject, and in passing, I will make such comments on their teaching as may seem right and reasonable to me.

Y. S., 5

S. D. II., 598

R. Y. S., 1

Well, we are told that "matter, life, form and consciousness constitute our lower quaternary and this is dominated by the angel incarnate." If we can succeed in strengthening this hypothesis we shall have done something towards solving the mystery of being, before which Western philosophers admit that their "science stands baffled and appalled." But in attempting this we must never forget the caution given us by H.P.B., that "no Theosophist ought to claim infallibility for anything he may say or write on occult matters."

T. B. G., 119

Heredity, 68

S. D., II., 640

The Oriental view of this subject is well expressed in *Thoughts on the Bagavad Gita*, where we read, "If you grant that the entire cosmos is one vast machine with a most beautiful adjustment of parts manifested on the atomic basis, you must also grant that beneath this objective aspect and serving as its support there must be a psychical manifestation which may be called force-matter. Further, below this there must be the cosmos made up of the substance of consciousness. This substance is, of course, subjective to us and is described in the Puranas as a kind of Tejas or pure flame." This is the cosmic aspect, in which Parabrahm stands in the same relation to consciousness that the Ego does on our plane.

T. B. G., 44

Now it is self-evident that a man must be before he can become conscious, even of his own being, and that till he distinguishes the "I" from the "Not I," individuality does not exist to him, therefore that "being" may well be regarded as the substance of consciousness. How we "are"

the wisest of us cannot say, but all thinkers intuitively predicate a boundless Be-ness in which countless millions of correlated Individualities live, move, and have their being. Observation teaches us that each of these Individualities has its degree of consciousness, and as consciousness is unthinkable apart from intelligence, while every effect necessitates a cause, we logically endeavour to satisfy our need to know by concluding that there is a universal Intelligence which is the prototype of our mental manhood. Having done this, we regard our physical bodies as the tangible manifestations of special ideas which are first intuited in the consciousness of this universal Intelligence, and then demonstrated as particular beings. Beyond this we cannot go, for we cannot think of Kosmos as non-existent, while as

A. R., 98 Max Muller well says, "To attempt to know what a thing is by itself, is to know a thing as we do not know it, *i.e.*, noumenally. Nothing can be real to us unless it submits to be phenomenal. Nothing can be objective to us except in the forms of our subjective consciousness." While Dvivedi tells us: "An Advaitin takes the material universe as it is and at once questions

R. Y., 23 himself what are the objects around him. He concludes that as consciousness can never transcend itself, and as objects are only perceptible by a series of changes reflected in and through this very consciousness, the nature of a thing *per se* can never be known. That it *is* is a fact beyond dispute, what it is beyond a certain name and form it is difficult or impossible to say. It is absurd to think of existence without consciousness or thought, and all objects, even prime matter, are compounds of thought and being." Thus the occultist and scientist are practically agreed, and H.P.B. says that Occultism teaches that "an Absolute Deity, having to be uncondi-

S. D., II., 158 tioned and unrelated, cannot be thought of at the same time as an active, creating, and living God, without an immediate degradation of the ideal."

Therefore the Cause of all causes is ever inscrutable to us, and the constant alternations of cause and effect are but another form of the old philosophical crux as to whether hens existed before eggs, or eggs were anterior to hens. Let us then not waste our time over such unprofitable speculations, but admitting that each of us is an incarnated intelligence, possessed of finite powers, but infinite possibilities, endeavour by means of occult teaching to get a right understanding of what is termed consciousness.

Scientifically consciousness is defined "(1) as the knowledge of sensations and mental operations, or of what passes in one's own mind: the act of the mind which makes known an internal object; (2) immediate knowledge of any object whatever." Thus, even in the common acceptation of the term, consciousness is knowledge beyond either thought or sensation. In this, science is in accord with Occultism, which teaches that, "on every plane, perceptive life proper, *i.e.*, consciousness, begins on the astral plane" and that "it is not the physical or objective molecules which see, hear, etc.";

while both science and Occultism would admit that these molecules are instruments through which consciousness cognizes man's correlation with other forms of being.

But here Occultism uses a special term, and that a very perplexing one, for it can hardly be said to have either a definite or a uniform meaning. Etymologically, "astral" should have some reference to the stars, but in Occultism this is rarely the case. Mrs. Besant tells us "that it is applied to *S. G.*, 5
all kinds of matter too subtile to be sensed by our present organs." This appears to mean that the term is used to designate the physical elements of things which, to most of us, exist only as possible perceptions. Then "Astral is identified with shining, pellucid in various degrees, from a quite *S. D.*, II., 251
filmy to a vascid state." In another place it is translated "Invisible."

But Franz Hartmann explains that in Occultism a star means a state, while a fixed star is a fixed state of a power in nature, a manifestation of Universal Life or All-Consciousness, and this we may take to be the real *O. S. M.*, 32
meaning of it.

"The Astral plane is identified with the next higher order of matter *S. G.*, 5
than that which our present senses perceive, and therefore its vibrations do not affect them. The finer senses, however, which lie waiting to be developed in each of us *can* perceive astral matter, as in Clairvoyance." It is also called "The Nerve Plane" and "Psychic World of super-sensuous *V.*, 75
Perceptions, and of deceptive sight," while Astral Light is defined as *S. D.*, I., 253
"Electro-magnetic Ether, the vital and luminous caloric," "Primordial *S. D.*, I., 73
Principle, the Wisdom of Chaos," "The Mother: the Cosmic Soul," and *S. D.*, I., 361
is said to be "The Generator and Destroyer of all forms." *I. U.*, I., 138

Consciousness then belongs to a plane that is still physical, though the matter of it is extremely rarefied. The idea appears to be that we have an intangible counterpart of our tangible body; that this counterpart has finer organs of sense, which correspond with our physical organs, take up the vibrations transmitted by them, and recreate the form which first imparted a special aggregate of motion to the molecules which had been differentiated as an organ of sense. But beyond even this is "the ultimate recipient of know- *Y. S.*, 31
ledge, the real Self, Purusha," "the Divine Self," "the ideal male part of *S. D.*, II., 574
the Astral Light" "Purusha is all knowledge; the indescribable cause and *S. D.*, I., 196
essence of consciousness," "while as the sole attributes of Atma are Be-ness, *Y. S.*, 59
consciousness and bliss" it is really very difficult to discriminate between *M. V.*, 57
them, in fact Hartmann asserts that "Spirit is consciousness on every *O. S. M.*, 64
plane of existence," and he continues, "There is no dead matter in the universe: each thing is a representation of a state of consciousness in *O. S. M.*, 78
nature, even if its state of consciousness differs from ours, and is therefore beyond the reach of our recognition; everything is a manifestation of Mind even if it does not exhibit any intelligent functions, or what we are capable

of recognising as such." While in the "Meditations of Vasudeva" we read,

M. V., 66 Atma through the vehicles of Maya and Avidya attains the states of Ishwara and Jiva just as a man becomes a father and grandfather. They are only different states of one being.

Of course it is impossible to give tangible proof of intangible substance to those who can use only physical organs, but do we not constantly accept other evidence in parallel cases? The Moons of Mars are invisible to an unaided vision, yet we accept the testimony of competent witnesses and give a qualified assent to the existence of those orbs. Now just as we believe astronomers when they tell us that anyone who looks in the right direction at the right time, through a suitable telescope, will see Deimos and Phobos revolving round the distant planet, so do occultists believe it is possible that certain men and women possess abnormal organs of sight which enable them to discern astral bodies as readily as we do physical bodies. To make the parallel perfect we are also told that though these organs have been atrophied in most men, still the use of them can be regained by suitable means, and that everyone who re-evolves them can

I. U., II, 558 see for himself that the astral body does exist; that it is unquestionably

N. B. G., 26 "the real, animal man," "The seat of his lower nature," "The senseless

S. D., II., 241 model of the physical man."

N. B. G., 82 Subba Row tells us that "an aura composes its Upadhi, or vehicle, and that behind this aura there is the energy which is the basis of the feeling of Self," *i.e.*, of Consciousness.

According to scientific observation, muscular contractility and molecular change are the transmitters of sensation up to the limits of physical sensibility, but this is utterly inconclusive. It tells us nothing about the "Being" who feels. Occultism asserts that "it is not the physical or objective molecules which see, hear," etc., but that there is an intangible recipient of tangible motion, and then tells us that "self-consciousness begins between Kama and Manas," *i.e.*, between form and mind.

Here "form" appears to signify the definite idea of a physical body, which has arrived at the critical condition immediately preceding objectivity, and which may transiently become the image of a tangible being, while mind may stand for the digestive force of a sort of spiritual stomach, through the action of which, the idea, embodied in the tangible being, is absorbed by the Inner Self, and so becomes actual knowledge If we make a distinction between feeling and our knowledge of that feeling, and try to understand how the one becomes the other, we seem to get some notion of the meaning of the text. The question is argued thus,

R. Y. S., 7 "Mâyâ is the active form of matter rendered so by differentiation in the universal consciousness, and it has two different powers of action. Its

overt action *(veks'epa)* multiplies the original differentiation *ad infinitum*, and its covert action *(âvarana)* throws, as it were, a veil over the false distinctions caused by this differentiation, and thus, in a sense, perpetuates them. So that evolution means nothing more than infinite differentiation of the universal consciousness caused by Maya. It is only a panorama of names and forms, the substance ever remaining the same. Thus, indeed, is the distinction of the seer and the sight (which are really one) produced within: and also the distinction between individuals and the individual—the All (Brâhma) without. In this manner that form of matter in which consciousness manifests itself in a tangible manner is called the subtlest form *(linga-deha)*, but it cannot act of itself, it therefore unites itself with a suitable material shell and identifies itself with it. This complex form is called Jiva in ordinary intercourse. Everything that *is* is a Jiva, an individual, for nothing *is* which has not its *linga* as well as its *sthula-deha*, *i.e.*, cause of Manas and Egoism and also its physical form.

It must not, however, be forgotten that though occultism denies that *our* sight, hearing, etc., are the attributes of molecules, it still maintains that even atoms which constitute molecules have the correspondents of these attributes, on their own plane. But, as with the denizens of every plane, that consciousness is limited by their needs, and that just as needs evolve so do organs of consciousness, till at last perception is perfected in the specialised organism, and the animal attains the totality of senses which is proper to our plane of being.

By this means the astral animal becomes conscious of those special vibrations which individualise the "Not I," by their correlated discrepancy from the vibrations which individualise the "I." In both cases these vibrations are modes of the "Great Breath," *i.e.*, two forms of one motion, each of which embodies a divine idea. Or, to put it otherwise: Motion, can be thought of apart from that which moves, but it can be perceived by us only in its effect upon something that is objective. This effect is apprehended by one or other of our senses in its own peculiar manner, and then we know the object which embodies some modification of motion by the change which it causes in the vibrations of our own molecular aggregation.

Now, objectively, neither the "I" nor the "Not I" is self-existent. They exist only as differentiations in the universal consciousness, and their perception of each other is an intuition of their correlation to that universal consciousness, limited by ideation. That being so, clearly the "I's" knowledge of the "Not I" is, essentially, a sub-state of divine consciousness, or the Unconscious having become self-conscious in another mode of being. This becoming is logically placed between Kama and Manas, *i.e.*, at the point where the objective and subjective are transmuted; the idea

embodied by the one being sympathetically demonstrated in the other.

Thus if, as asserted, our life is a succession of states of consciousness, and each state is the absorption or knowledge of an embodied idea, it
S. D., II., 598 follows that we successively become that which we know, or, as the Adwaitees say, an external object is, to us, merely the product of our
Y. S., 3 mental states. This enables us to formulate some very important deductions.

Then Dvivedi tells us "Consciousness is ever one: but the thinking principle transforms itself into objective and subjective phenomena, and the immutable seer is for the time obscured by it, or, which is the same thing, is assimilated into it."

There is also another view which has much to commend it. The evolution of man has carried him through every existing form of being on the lower planes, consequently his perception of these forms may only be a resurrected consciousness, a living again as he has previously lived.

Some of us have been present when an idea, embodied in thought, has been transferred from one consciousness to another. This was done just as readily as if the idea had been expressed in a material form, and the knowledge of it had been transmitted through the ordinary physical organs. If then thought forms produce a consciousness identical with that produced by physical forms, do we not approximate to a perception of the process by which the intangible becomes tangible, and the one becomes many, while the essential unity is ever unbroken?

And now having said so much about vibrations, it behoves me to give
F. F., 66 you some authorities for attaching such great importance to them. Well, Rama Prasad says, "that it is not till the life-wave reaches humanity that the vibrations of Iswara, or 'the collective consciousness of the manifested Deity' (*S. D.*, I., 132) begin to show themselves in the mind."
H. L., 62 Then the author of *Letters that Have Helped Me* tells us that: "The different states are only differences of vibration, and we do not recognise the astral and other planes because we are out of time with their vibrations," that is, our vibrations must keep time with the vibrations of things before we can cognize *their* modes of motion as different from our own modes of motion. When the rates of our vibrations accord with those of others, we are in the same state of consciousness, and have the same scale of thought and action. But this must not be understood as meaning that ordinary people can ever know everything about other people's private affairs. We can be in accord
Y. S., 64 but not in unison with them. "The state of mind can be understood, but not the thought which occupies it," unless a special Samyama is performed.

In order to evolve this sympathy, we are told that: "The important
H L., 63 thing is to develop the Self in the self, and then the possession of wisdom belonging to all wise men at once becomes ours."

This can be best explained by a quotation from *Nature's Finer Forces*, where we read, "By accelerating the motions of the Tatwas they become spiritual." That is, if we can increase the rate of our vital vibrations till they keep pace with those of higher beings, we shall be able to receive the same intuitions that are imparted to them, and have the same direct knowledge which they possess. Nay, more, we are told that "All mental action produces a change in the vibrations of the Universal Mind." This seems quite reasonable, for each mind is not a self-existent self, but a manifestation of the Universal Mind, therefore future individualizations in the Universal Mind must epitomise every previous change in the vibrations of the Universal Mind. Thus each of us is accountable not only to his own self for the use he makes of the powers conferred upon him, but is responsible also to all future "selves" for the effect that his action has produced on the essentiality of their vital vibrations.

F. F., 152

F. F.

But however much evil may arise from individual perversity, "the Universal Mind is ever spiritualising, that is, quickening its vibrations; consequently, the later the Manu, the more spiritual, so a time will come when the present macrocosmic mind will be entirely absorbed in the soul." What will then be man's life rate it is impossible for us to imagine.

F F., 152

Meantime, occult training enables us transiently to anticipate this evolution. Kundalini, "the Universal life principle," is "an electro-spiritual force," which, we are told, "moves in three and a half circles, and is believed to encircle the procreative will of the self-existent Deity." "It progresses with an inconceivable velocity, and its vibrations are swifter than thought." We, of course, are borne along in Kundalini, while to obtain a consciousness of personal egoity we must be, for a life-point, one of the countless states which its motions are to us.

S. D., I., 293

V., 79

O. D. P., I., 23

If we picture our self as standing in a rapid current and endeavouring to get thimblefuls out of it in order to quench a raging thirst, we shall have some idea of our earth-life. If we trusted our self to one of its bubbles, and allowed ourselves to be borne along by the current, our task would be much easier, provided we could keep our heads above water, and the bubble did not burst under us.

Something analogous to this is what we term Yogi practice. The self ceases to stand in the mire of earth, or to snatch mere thimblefuls of consciousness, for when entranced, Kundalini bears it along faster and faster, till in Samadhi it can drink of the vital tide as fully and as quietly as if it were at rest, and the vibrations, which now blur one another, then become distinct perceptions, for consciousness can keep pace with them.

"The conception of all things being divine ideas manifested by divine thought, is not confined to Oriental teaching. Aristotle speaks of a Prime Mover, as intelligence, thinking itself." "Parmenides says thinking is not

T. P. R., 395

T. P. R., 364

different from being, because there is nothing but being, and thinking is thinking of being." "Socrates speaks of the thought in all, and Anaxagoras of the Nous which is all things," "while the Klamaths, a tribe of Red Indians, say, 'The Old Father made the world by thinking and willing.'" And the Maori of New Zealand believe that thought, the subtlest element, first generated in the primordial night and was followed by desire; or according to a different version, thought arose first, then the spirit, and lastly matter. Max Muller tells us that "thought embodied in sound is the first sentient manifestation." "Philo Judæus teaches that God forms to Himself an ideal invisible world containing the ideas of all things. These ideas are the patterns of all things, and the power by which God conceived them is frequently called the Wisdom of God." "While the only-begotten Son is the thought of God realised and rendered visible to the world." These notions, therefore, occultists hold in very good company.

T. P. R., 392
T. P. R., 383
Peschell's Races 353
T. P. R., 402

If it is asked, "What are the factors of consciousness?" we are told "Jiva and Fohat." Jiva is defined as "that state in which Prana, or Universal Life, becomes conscious of its individuality," while Fohat, "the energising and guiding intelligence is also an omnipresent form of consciousness." "It is the vehicle through which the ideas of the Universal Mind are impressed upon matter." "By its action upon a compound or even a simple body, the phenomena we call life are produced," consequently there could not be even atomic consciousness, or chemical affinity without Fohat.

S. D., I., 493
S. D., I., 85
S. D., I., 526

But though Fohat may be termed intelligence, it must not be individualised as an intelligence. "It is only personified electric vital fluid, the transcendent binding unity of all cosmic energies." "The active male potency of the female reproductive power," or as Dvivedi calls it, "The Light of the Logos." These, therefore, like all other modes of consciousness, are not definite physical forms whose outlines can be determined by our senses, but subjective aspects or differentiations in the One Eternal Be-ness! Ideas through which the Finite can understand the Infinite by limiting its cognition to the aspect presented to it. Looking at it in another mode, Dvivedi says, "Buddhi (or intellect) is the result of Sattva or quiescence in divine knowledge), and is the instrument through which all things are perceived by Purasha."

S. D., I., 111
H.P.B.
N. B. G., 49
Y. S., 37

Now as consciousness is the sum of our being, and our highest possible life is a true manifestation of the divine Be-ness, it is evident that whatever vitiates our consciousness of that Be-ness, must also debase our Being. If then, instead of obeying the pure intuitions which are consequent from our essential Oneness with the Âtmic prototype, and which ever reveal to us the perfect Law of Life, we reject the good of all, and care only

for selfish gratification, habits will be formed which render it more and more difficult for us to resist temptation. This lessening of the possibility of well-doing is Karma, and the Universalisation of egoism in his consciousness is the greatest possible alienation of Man from his Higher Self, the altruistic Atma. Its consummation is the obliteration of all consciousness of the divine Eternal Be-ness, and an absolute identification with the beast that perisheth.

And now, having considered our subject somewhat generally, let us proceed to study what may be termed the chronology of consciousness.

Our Higher Ego, "the ancestral heart, the reincarnating principle," is "the subjective individual consciousness and perception of the potential attributes of a human entity. A unity progressing through various spheres or states of being." "It is the consciousness in man, 'I am I'"—"The reflected image of the Logos in Karana Sarira." H.P.B. tells us that "when the immortal Ego incarnates it becomes, as a total, a compound unit of matter and spirit, which, together, act on seven different planes of being and consciousness." We have therefore to regard the incarnated Ego as different *in* itself and *to* itself from the homogeneous Be-ness in which it is a differentiation. This difference consists in it having apparently seven different modes of being and consequently seven different states of consciousness. Still, as it is an universal axiom that nothing can *be* without its antecedent cause, "we may venture to assert that the intuition which differentiates the idea of self, or Ego, in *our* consciousness must have had a prototypal existence previous to its manifestation.

S. D., I., 220
R. Y. S., 23
H.P.B. N.B.G.
S. D., II., 63

Now intuition is direct knowledge—that which comes to us without a reasoning process; it is the germ which thought evolves and reason formulates into a logical deduction, an established verity which apparently becomes an instinct in our next incarnation. Thought, therefore, is impossible without an antecedent intuition, and clearly without thought there can be no thinker, consequently as thinker and man are synonymous terms man and intuition must have ever co-existed.

Then comes the question, "from whence do we derive our intuitions?" I should answer it in this way. There is universal knowledge deduced from universal experience and stored in universal consciousness, and it does not seem unreasonable to regard intuition as the effect of an immediate contact of our finite consciousness with this universal consciousness, the result being that a spark, or germ, of higher truth is transmitted to us, and then by cogitation we are able to digest it into an instinct which will be a predisposition of our will in all future incarnations. Let us see how this will work out. Our Ante-Ego is regarded as impersonal; that is to say, to us, a universal consciousness *was* before that limitation in it, which we intuit as "I," *became*. Subjectively, therefore, our Ego has a

R. Y. S., 3

past, a present, and a future, to us, while the universal Self is ever present to itself, and our being is to *it* only a mode of consciousness, a state or aspect of Be-ness; consequently our hope of immortality consists in the possibility of perpetuating our special mode of consciousness in the universa consciousness: of making our life an instinct of the divine life: an experience which will become a predisposition to eternal special vibrations in the Causeless Cause of all causes. Occultism asserts that this is possible, nay, that no man can ever cease to be except by his own wilful perversity.

Man's lower nature is of the earth, earthly. His body is an aggregate of what science terms cells, and Occultism calls Lives. These we regard as the simplest and most universal forms in which Be-ness manifests itself as life. But there seems little doubt that the cell of science is a highly organised being, a whole universe of Lives infinitely diverse in their forms, faculties and consciousness. Each of these Lives knows that it is, and it is ever striving to become more than it has been. We may call them the "atoms of Prana:" the subjective constituents of vitality or the infinitesimalities which our most abstract consciousness can present to us as possibilities. But after all what are they but beings like unto ourselves; divine ideas evolving in the Universal Consciousness, and any of them may become hereafter much more than we are now. As for men and women, are they really anything but cells whose aggregate is evolving the divine idea of humanity?—and for aught we know humanity itself is but a single cell in an organism that embodies a still grander idea of that life which is as great as it is small.

There can be no doubt that in all stages of being there is a uniform plan; the building up of the one by the aggregation of the many, and diverse as are the functions to be performed, that plan is never varied. The many are for the one, and the one is common to all. By the advancement of the one its constituents progress; by its ideation their needs are evolved; their possibilities are realised, and, as the potential consciousness of the "One" is infinite, we can conceive of no bounds to the multiplication of its differentiations.

If we turn to the lowest plane, Occultism tells us that the consciousness of Lives is of the simplest kind represented by one unvarying oscillation through which consonant objects are so sensed that the "I" is distinguished from the "Not I" in a vague, dream-like manner, while Atma-Buddhi-Manas act only as cosmic principles. Their in-dwelling is but a latent possibility for the individual, in which all senses are comprised in the consciousness of Egoity.

The Life, however, being on the objective plane, it is subject to the law of duality. The passive necessitates the active, and their inter-action is rudimentary generation. Differentiated consciousness becomes the differ-

entiator of itself, and so a higher form of being is intuited by which differences in the "Not I" can be observed, and their relations to the "I" rudimentarily discriminated. Thus what we term affinity is evolved, and through it objective being attains its primary aspiration "Collective Unity."

The second state of consciousness is that in which are all the latent potentialities of human consciousness. A collective unity having been formed by the aggregation of many cells, being, of necessity, has become complex. Each cell possesses its own appropriate consciousness and its distinctive characteristics. But besides a multitude of individual consciousnesses, now there is also a collective consciousness in which the common good and the collective aspiration are formulated.

Now the needs of a collective unity are larger and more varied than those of an individual cell. This necessitates a differentiation of function and co-operative labour which seems to be organised in this manner.

When a primordial cell divides, each half has a dominant differentiation, a tendency which impels its evolution in a special direction, and the aim of its being is the perfection of its own characteristic. The first objective differentiation is that of male and female, and these specialisations prevail on every subsequent plane of being.

But each sex possesses the possibility of its opposite, for each half cell becomes a whole cell on the second plane, and then is conscious only of egoity, homogeneous and *a*-sexual. There is therefore a distinct reversion to the primordial state; a persistency of real unity in seeming duality. When a sub-division occurs the original plan is followed, with results that are essentially identical, and however deeply we may study cell-genesis, we find no change in the order of evolution.

The consequence of this unity in diversity is an innate consciousness of a common antecedence, and from this consciousness an altruism is evolved which becomes instinctive and pervades each succeeding organism, giving it a latent consciousness that the good of each is identified with the good of all.

But the egoism which characterised the cell still dominates the collective unity of cells. This egoism is the intuitive consciousness of infinite possibilities resulting from the antecedent identification with Be-ness, and this is the start point for a fuller manifestation of being. So while the cell is deified on its own plane, the higher life has attained only to personal instinct. Personal instinct, however, follows the divine order of progression, and in due time becomes collective consciousness, and collective consciousness intuits the idea of humanity. This idea is passive, but in due order it is fructified by its active correlative "thought." Then man "the thinker" is evolved in the universal Consciousness and each Monad becomes

a cell in the spiritual Being who is to be the outcome of human collective consciousness.

S. D., I., 63

Historically, it appears that at a certain well-defined point a dominant idea was intuited, and its personification became the Manu of a new race. That is a divine idea, demonstrated by divine thought, became the potential manifestation of a higher possibility of being in the consciousness that was fitted to receive it. This consciousness seminated by the intuition, clothed the idea with a new thought-personality, which by the law of evolution in due order became a physical manifestation. Thus the one process is constantly repeated. The germ ever draws vitality from the infinite and evolves the stem, the branch, the leaf and the fruit "whose seed is in itself." These four may be taken to represent the Quaternary, while the root is the Upadhi of the Triad through which the particular draws egoity from the universal.

Genesis I., 11

The next generalisation in consciousness is that of Psychological being, the subjective perception of a mental Kama as distinct from a physical body.

S. D., I., 176

Kama, we are told, is "the personification of that feeling which leads and propels to creation." It is therefore not a tangible form, but that limitation in consciousness by which we distinguish one idea from all other ideas: or perhaps we might say it is the special vibration of Be-ness which manifests in us a differentiation of being. It is also defined as "human egotistic volition"—"that desire for personal gratification which characterises our animal nature both in its physical and psychical aspects." "It is the active power producing all vital phenomena"—"the abstract aspect of life in a world of illusion."

S. D., I., 593

This mode of consciousness, then, may be regarded as the idea of self-aggrandisement demonstrated by life-experiences, and become a definite instinct in every order of being. It can therefore be thought of as the memory of past incarnations, the mental tendencies of physical life, the Ego's desire to be again whatever it has been in the past.

F. F., 152

Now as "the change of Manu is always for the better," that which we *have been* is necessarily of a lower order than what we *are*, and as we should inevitably rank higher among beings of an inferior grade than we do among those of our own status, we should naturally be able to indulge our physical appetites more freely if we could revert to the conditions of a past life and still retain our present functional evolution.

But the desire for such physical supremacy is fatal to spiritual progression: it is retarding our vital vibrations instead of striving to accelerate or spiritualize them. If the personal Ego moulds its thought-body on an animal type, it can only function on an animal plane. It will have no

spiritual needs, therefore there will be no evolution of spiritual organs, and consequently there can be no realization of higher possibilities, so the man will hereafter be simply a survival of an effete form of humanity.

We have now arrived at the most important point in the evolution of man. He has culminated as an intellectual animal. In his consciousness there is an instinct which ever recalls the experiences of past incarnations and urges him to seek after past pleasures. But there is also an intuition which prompts him to aspire to a higher life with nobler aims and wider sympathies. On his choice depends not only his personal well-being, but the growth of humanity and the joy of All. I wonder how many of us have realised the awful responsibility which our manhood imposes upon us.

Buddhism says, "Man's consciousness will cease to feel, but his virtue will live and work out its full effect in the decrease of the misery of sentient beings," therefore, as a natural corollary, his vice will also live after him and will work for the woe of all, and Occultism says that, "in others' woes, the woe-maker will, hereafter, be the first to suffer." *D. B.*, 104

This dual consciousness is termed Manas. Now Manas is defined as "the atomic feeler of happiness," it is also called "feeling"—"The impress that is concerned with mere perception"—and is translated "Mind." We are told that: "In the macrocosm it springs from Ahamkara or egoism; in the microcosm from Mahat or cosmic intelligence; in man from Buddhi or the spiritual soul, the cosmic Monad—and the term serves both for sense and action." In animals and idiots the lower Manas seems to stand in the same relation to intellect that the higher Manas stands to the lower Manas in man. They can deduce physical effects from their past experiences of physical causes, but they cannot predicate psychic causes from mental effects; therefore that which has not been phenomenal is assumed to have no place in their philosophy. *M.*, 22 *I. U.*, 274 *R. Y.*, 36 *S. D.*, I., 334 *S. D.*, I., 177

The distinction here made between the microcosm and man is very remarkable, and confirms the contention that, strictly speaking, the term man should be limited to the Unconscious become conscious in some form or other. As H.P.B. tells us: "Each immortal God (soul, or divine idea) in its turn must be united with a human being, and from the moment of its consciousness it commences a series of births and deaths." When it is said that man is the microcosm of the Universe, it really means that his physical form is the epitome of all the previous forms in which Be-ness has ever manifested, while the real man is that very Be-ness in its highest manifestation: or, as Orientals express it, "Humanity, taken collectively, is the heart and brain of Yagna Purusha." *I. U.*, I., 348 *T. B. G.*, 18

"The higher Manas, we are told, is the mental faculty which distinguishes man from the mere animal and makes him an intelligent being." *H.P.B.*

K. T., 176 It is the "spiritual self-consciousness"—"The permanent individuality"—"The reincarnating Ego"—"The vehicle of Mahat or divine ideation."

S. D., II., 138 This is the state to which H.P.B. refers when she says, "When beings reach the status of man the souls receive the principle of (conscious) immorality, become spirits, then pass into the choir of gods."

In the higher Manas, then, we have the self-idea so evolved that its intelligent principle has become permanently individualized in the divine consciousness. The impersonal "I" has become conscious of its "Not I," and in personifying it, has by Kryasakti imparted to this "Not I" all the attributes of the divine "I." Foremost of these attributes is will, and will implies freedom of choice, while this freedom constitutes moral responsibility.

We have consequently to regard Manasic consciousness as a passive principle in everything below the animal kingdom. Not that it is ever really still, but we possess no faculties by which we can observe it beyond the arbitrary limit we term "animal," therefore, as we have no consciousness of it, to us it does not exist. Thus, for the purposes of philosophical classification, it is said that Manas begins with animal life, but in reality this Manas is the synthesis of another septenate which is the microcosm of its macrocosm "man."

On the same principle the Lower Manas is thought of apart from the Higher Manas, and man as distinct from all other animals. This course is convenient and harmless, so there is no reason why we should not adopt it, and leaving captious critics to contend for the brotherhood of brutes, endeavour to ascertain what are our own powers, duties and possibilities. But we should always remember that in these classifications every principle has only a relative position, and that whether any special principle is Atma, Buddi, Manas, or Prana, is determined by the plane of consciousness on which the personality is then functioning. Even Ishwara can ultimately only be regarded as an atom of Prana combining with others to manifest an aspect of the Absolute, and we are told "that man's seventh principle, or Atma, is the ultimate state (of consciousness), attainable by the self (or true soul) after crossing the ocean of conditioned experience, or

T. B. G., 27 Sansara." Atma, therefore, is not a separate entity, but the highest ideal which is possible to us in our present stage of evolution; while Sat, Narayana, Brahma, etc., is our possible permanent and changeless state of

T. B. G., 28 consciousness in relation to that which is temporary and changing.

His Higher Manas, we are told, makes man a moral and intelligent being. That is, he is able to distinguish right from wrong, and to submit his will to the law of reason. This law is his consciousness that the rights of others limit his right to the gratification of his instinctive desires. Man has not only the craving for self-aggrandisement which is common to

all beings, but the altruistic sympathies established in past incarnations have made his consciousness receptive of intuitions which bring him into direct relations with intelligences on a higher plane than his own, and enable him to fashion his aspirations on the model of their ideation. The theory is that he can thus attain knowledge by *intuiting* the wisdom which others can gain only by prolonged mental or physical exertion, and that so his spiritual progress is expedited. This theory each must prove in his or her personal experience.

Beyond the Manasic lies the Buddhic consciousness, a state which is ruled rather by the heart than the head, where Man prefers love to reason, and instinctively asks what is for the good of all, not what is profitable to himself. There are, of course, many degrees of this state, from secret alms-giving up to perfect self-devotion: from sectarian charity which considers who are of the household of faith, up to the intelligent godliness, which is pure, wise and universal; from the saint who dreams in Devachan to the Nirmanakaya who by boundless benevolence has learned how to multiply his unit of bliss by the joys of a whole humanity.

A constant aspiration towards this Buddhic consciousness seems to be the highest mental tone that is compatible with earth life. Our bodies require food and clothing, and the duty of each of us is to provide for his own wants by his own labour; consequently to cultivate ecstasies which incapacitate us for performing the social tasks which have properly devolved upon us, certainly savours more of selfishness than altruism, and must tend to debase rather than to exalt our manhood. As Krishna says: "What is required and what follows as a natural consequence from Raja-yoga is freedom from the calculation of the results of our necessary actions," not the cessation of them.

When his physical needs have ceased to *be*, and man has transcended animal desires, then he may hope to be one with his Father in Heaven: till then he should work and wait. At present our highest consciousness seems to be akin to that subtile intuition by which a mathematician knows that a thing *is* before he is able to cognize it. Such an intuition is a foretaste of that universal harmony which is the unattainable essentiality of Reason: the ultimate blending of all differentiations in the one unconditioned unity.

"It is only when the state of Yoga is reached that the consciousness becomes quite pure and ready to receive all knowledge and all impressions, from any source whatever. This state is acquired by suppressing the transformations of the thinking principle." *Y. S.*, 3

To show how subtile are the Hindu differentiations of thought, I may instance "Asmila, (the sense of being). Asmila is not to be identified with Ahankara, or egoism; it is only the consciousness of Being, and quite in- *Y. S.*, 10

dependent of the form 'I am.' The sphere of Ahankâra is Sânanda Samâdhi, or joyous meditation; whereas Asmila refers very nearly to Purusha, through and of which all subsists." This is the cognition of the knower.

These higher states of consciousness are often spoken of as "emotional." Now "emotion" is a very noteworthy term. The *e* is an abbreviation of *ex*, and consequently its equivalent. *Ex* may mean either "out of," or "an intensification of." Consequently e-motion means either out of motion, that is (*a*) absolute rest, or (*b*) separation from the Great Breath, *i.e.*, annihilation. In the other sense, emotion may mean the intensification of a motion by multiplying it into all-motion.

Taking this last to be the truest signification, may we not understand that when man attains a higher consciousness he exhibits all the motions or vibrations which constitute the countless phases of his previous knowledge. When we remember that each of these vibrations is subdivided *ad infinitum*, and that every single subdivision must be to him a distinct state of consciousness intuited in orderly succession, we can readily admit that, in Buddhic consciousness, a snail might as well hope to out-run lightning, as reason to keep pace with these messengers of knowledge. At each time point, there are trillions of these vibrations, and every impact of them transmits a special knowledge; consequently when Manas is identified with the Higher Ego, it must respond to each of these modes of motion, and cognize it as distinct from every other aspect of the Infinite.

Whether even this consciousness will content man is another matter. Parabrahm, we know, could not abide in even a higher consciousness. The omnipresence of omniscience is monotony, and monotony is not the harmony which seems to be a universal necessity. Consequently the concord of diversity ever progresses, while the periodic unison of all only gives the key-note of fuller harmony.

And so the song of life ever grows grander and grander, as little rills of being add new tones to swell the flow of melody which utters the consciousness of all. And who would have it otherwise? What rest can remain for the true people of the true God?

> "Their hope is eternal progression,
> With Charity fruitful in all."

And so the end is but the beginning, and death only the antecedent of life.

Y.S. "Yoga Sutra of Patanjali."
S.D. "Secret Doctrine."
R.Y.S. "Raja Yoga. Sri Vâkya-Sudhâ."
T.B.G. "Thoughts on Bagavad Gita."
Heredity. Dr. R. A. Douglas Lithgow.

A.R.	"Anthropological Religion" (M. Muller).
R.Y.	"Raja Yoga."
S.G.	"Small Glossary."
O.S.M.	"Occult Science in Medicine."
V.	"Voice of Silence."
I.U.	"Isis Unveiled."
M.V.	"Meditations of Vasudeva."
F.F.	"Nature's Finer Forces."
H.L.	"Letters that have Helped Me."
O.D.P.	"Oriental Department Tracts."
T.P.R.	"Theosophy or Psychological Religion" (Muller).
H.P.B.	"Glossary," by H.P.B.
D.B.	Rhys Davids' "Buddhism."
M.	"Monism or Advaitism."
K.T.	"Key to Theosophy."

R. B. Holt.

THE HERESY OF SEPARATENESS.

Reprinted from "Lucifer."

Lack of charity is the basis of all immorality. By "charity" is meant the true brotherly love, or viewing all other beings as one's own self. "Sin" has its rise in selfishness, or the idea of benefit or advantage to one's self as separate from—hence in opposition to—other selves. When man *realizes* the spiritual identity of all Being, then only does he cease to sin, for then only does he know that to sin is to injure himself and all other selves—the universal whole—by action in opposition to Universal Law. But such realization consists only in living out his belief. Intellectual appreciation and acceptance are mere stepping-stones to the groundwork of true realization.

Thus he who lacks charity for all his fellows is himself immoral in thought and in fact. In dwelling in thought upon the sin of another, he perpetuates and vivifies that sin through the thought pictures thus made, and clothed anew with his own mental energy. Man thus becomes a sharer in the "sin" of his fellow by creating new effects for the original evil. We graft upon ourselves the sins of others; moreover, the *cause* of sin is in both cases identical; it is the mutual belief in separation from the universal whole. Thus the method of wrong doing differs, but the original cause exists in both the sinner and the

man who condemns him. He who has entire charity, has it by virtue of his recognition of the identity of all souls. This identity often obscures the original starting point of an evil action. The self-righteous man, and even the stern moralist, may have created in their abhorrence of sin, strong pictures which may have an automatic action upon the sensitive inner bodies of mankind. Or our brother may have seen his fault, may resolve to amend, and may again be overpowered by the dynamic action of the thought pictures of that fault poured forth by our minds. They have a life which binds him down to his sin. Hence the only safe course is that charity which "seeketh no evil." The moment we attach immorality to our fellows we commit the same sin so far as the real root of sin is concerned. True charity implies a recognition of the existence of evil itself as a misuse of powers, and as a fault common in this age to all men. It does not dwell upon those particular forms of sin most abhorrent to its own mental make-up when these are manifested by men or women, but endeavours to lay the axe to that common root of self in all men—most of all in the personal self—while helping all other selves. The recognition that all are alike sinners against the Law of Unity, causes a man to seek for likeness and not difference between himself and all other men. Then he begins to overlook the sins of men and to abandon the character of judge, accepting instead that of helper of all selves. But let him, as he values his own soul, continue to condemn the root sin of self. And let him ask only of all others and in his own heart, not the question, "Have these sinned?" but, "Are these endeavouring in any degree to help the world?" If not, they most of all need his charity and his aid.

J.

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The Myth of Prometheus

OR THE

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THE MYTH OF PROMETHEUS, OR THE COMING OF CREATIVE POWER TO MAN.

In *The Secret Doctrine*, Mme. Blavatsky tells us that she has spent a considerable part of her life in studying the hidden meaning of all ancient myths both sacred and profane. For these myths are allegories in which are embodied certain universal truths with regard to the life and history of man. She tells us that "without the help of symbology—with its seven departments, of which the moderns know nothing—no ancient Scripture can ever be correctly understood." For the different offshoots of the Aryan race embodied in various forms the truths which had been carried down by legend from the time when they were revealed to the Sons of Light by their Divine Instructors.

The Grecian myth of Prometheus is one of the most interesting and important of the ancient legends, because it relates to the turning point of the great cycle of evolution, the coming of self-consciousness to man. It symbolizes the emergence of the race from the state of childhood, when good and evil were alike unknown, when the harmony of nature was as yet unbroken, because the individual man had not as yet realised himself as a separate entity. For the race as well as the individual has passed through the stage graphically described by Tennyson :—

"The baby new to earth and sky
What time his tender palm is prest
Against the circle of the breast,
Has never thought that "this is I :"

But as he grows he gathers much,
And learns the use of "I "and "me."
And finds "I am not what I see,
And other than the things I touch."

With regard to this individualizing process, *The Secret Doctrine* says :—

"The Ocean of Matter does not divide into its potential and constituent drops until the sweep of the life-impulse reaches the evolutionary stage of man-birth. The tendency towards segregation into individual Monads is gradual, and in the higher animals comes almost to the point."

This realising of one's self as a separate entity is the sin of separateness, but it is also a necessary step before the path of renunciation can be entered. One cannot give up that which one is not conscious of

possessing. The force of individuality is said in Vasudevamanana to be that "which prevents all except Ishwara and Atmajnanis (those having wisdom of Atma or 'Self') from realizing the differences between Atma and the five sheaths by enveloping such personages with intense mist."

And again:—

"Of the tree of mundane existence it is the effects of Avarana Shakti (individuality) that form the root. . . . And it is this Avarana Shakti alone that is also the cause of final emancipation."

The idea of man as an individual is then the first key to the legend of Prometheus. But it has many meanings, only a few of which can be suggested in the present paper.

Prometheus is Lucifer, the light-bringer, but also the cause of sin; he is the Lord of Light, but also the Spirit of Darkness. He represents the Manasaputra or Sons of Mind, who brought down the key of knowledge from heaven to animal man (see the cover of *Lucifer*), and became in consequence chained for many ages to the rock of earthly existence. He is the god who descends into matter to redeem it, but becomes thereby tainted by its evil tendencies, and is perpetually tortured by the vulture of remorse. He deliberately chooses to live many lives of suffering with self-consciousness rather than to remain a passive partaker in the joys of heaven.

Prometheus is chained to the rock by the order of Zeus. The latter represents the Lunar Pitris, the creators of animal man, his Primeval Progenitors who are "spiritually lower but physically stronger than the Prometheans; therefore the latter are shewn conquered. The lower Host whose work the Titan spoiled, and thus defeated the plans of Zeus, was on this earth in its own sphere and plane of action; whereas the superior Host was an exile from Heaven, who had got entangled in the meshes of Matter. The inferior Host were masters of all the cosmic and lower Titanic Forces; the higher Titan possessed only the Intellectual and Spiritual Fire."

Thus is explained "the War in Heaven" which ever rages in the inner nature of all human beings, and which rages the more fiercely the more clearly the presence of "Prometheus" is felt. "The good which I would I do not," said Paul ruefully, "but the evil which I would not that I do."

Thus is discord brought down upon the earth by the coming of Prometheus, for it is only by suffering that any further progression can be made. "The Occultists," says Mme. Blavatsky, "recognise in pain and suffering but the necessary pangs of incessant procreation; a series of stages toward an ever growing perfectibility." It is the ever present con-

test between free-will and necessity, the lower nature is bound, but the higher is free. "Our Life," says Carlyle, "is compassed round with Necessity, yet is the meaning of Life itself no other than Freedom, than Voluntary Force. Thus have we a warfare."

Having passed into the human stage of evolution, it is not possible for mankind, did they even wish it, to return to the irresponsible condition of the animal man. The human soul may refuse to listen to the voice of conscience, and may become utterly degraded, lower in one sense than the beasts; the lower mind may break asunder from its inner God, but even then it still remains the distorted image of that which it disregards, the responsibility for its actions remains, the karma of all its deeds must be fully worked out. Its capacity for evil is the inverted aspect of its capacity for good. The gift of Prometheus has become a curse.

Yet there are all stages of knowledge and therefore all stages of responsibility. It is said in *The Secret Doctrine* that when "the Sons of Wisdom, the Sons of Night, ready for rebirth came down . . . some entered the Chhâyâs, some projected a spark." The "Chhâyâs" were the animal ethereal forms of primeval man created by the Lunar Pitris who are symbolised as "Zeus" in the Promethean myth. The Sons of Wisdom (Promethean entities) "entered" those who were ready, and these became the Arhats or Sages. "Those who received but a spark constitute the average humanity which have to acquire their intellectuality during the present Manvantaric evolution, after which they will be ready in the next for the full reception of the Sons of Wisdom." There was also a third class, the "latest arrivals" among the human Monads "which had hardly evolved from their last transitional and lower animal forms at the close of the Third Round." These "became narrow-headed," not being ready even to "receive a spark."

Now the fuller the inner enlightenment, the greater is the power of the individual man for good or for evil, and the greater therefore the karmic result of each action and thought. Prometheus, as stated above, has his dual aspect, and it is not possible to be conscious of the one without at the same time being conscious of the other. Mankind was born as Carlyle says, "when the Sun was in Libra." The active force of nature reveals itself to him in both its aspects at once. Lucifer does not ask "*Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil*;" he says on the contrary "*Lead us into temptation in order that we may be delivered from evil.*" As Mme. Blavatsky says:—"Perfection, to be fully such, must be born out of imperfection, the incorruptible must grow out of the corruptible, having

the latter as its vehicle, and basis and contrast." It is by means of the union of opposing forces in man's nature, that the attainment of the God-like state becomes possible. Had Prometheus remained "in heaven," the connecting link between the animal and the divine in man could not have been supplied. "It is owing to this rebellion of intellectual life against the morbid inactivity of pure spirit, that we are what we are—self-conscious thinking men, with the capabilities and attributes of Gods in us for good as much as for evil. Hence the Rebels are our Saviours."

They "preferred *the curse of incarnation*, and the long cycles of terrestrial existence and rebirth, to seeing the misery, even if *unconscious*, of the beings who were evolved as shadows out of their brethren, through the semi-passive energy of their *too spiritual* Creators."

"Tradition shows the celestial Yogis offering themselves as voluntary victims in order to redeem Humanity, which was created god-like and perfect at first, and endow him with human affections and aspirations. To do this, they had to give up their natural state, descend on our globe, and take up their abode on it for the whole cycle of the Mahâyuga, thus exchanging their impersonal Individualities for individual Personalities—the bliss of sidereal existence for the curse of terrestrial life."

The condition of the early races of mankind, not yet enlightened by the coming of Prometheus, is one which it is very difficult to picture out in words. The physical body was not fully formed. The men of that time were ethereal, sexless. They "had no personality as yet. They had Monads—Breaths of the One Breath, as impersonal as the source from which they proceeded. They had bodies, or rather shadows of bodies, which were sinless, hence Karma-less. Therefore, as there was no Kâma Loka—least of all Nirvâna or even Devachan—for the Souls of men who had no personal Egos, there could be no intermediate periods between the incarnations. Like the Phœnix, primordial man resurrected out of his old into a new body. Each time, and with each new generation, he became more solid, more physically perfect, agreeably with the evolutionary law, which is the Law of Nature. Death came with the complete physical organism, and with it moral decay."

"Thenceforth the soul was too deeply buried under physical clothing to re-assert its existence except in the case of those more spiritual natures which with every cycle became more rare."

The gradual formation of the physical body round the astral by means of the terrestrial forces is described in many passages in *The Secret Doctrine*, and Mme. Blavatsky says:—

"It is shown in every ancient Scripture and Cosmogony that man

evolved primarily as a *luminous incorporeal form*, over which, like molten brass poured into the model of the sculptor, the physical frame of his body was built by and through and from the lower forms and types of animal and terrestrial life."

The "*luminous incorporeal form*" was created by the Barhishad Pitris, (Zeus in the Grecian myth) who were possessed of the physical creative "fire." "They would not, simply because they could not, give to man that sacred spark, which burns and expands into the flower of human reason and self-consciousness, for they had it not to give. This was left to that class of Devas who became symbolized in Greece under the name of Prometheus; to those who had naught to do with the physical body, yet everything with the purely spiritual man."

What the Barhishad Pitris gave was the shadowy form, round which the physical body was afterwards built. The first race was mindless and senseless, passive in nature and without sin. It was "too material even in its ethereality to be a Hierarchy of Gods; too spiritual and pure to be Men." Its characteristics were all *negative*, the element of personal effort had not yet appeared. It "had three *rudimentary* elements in it, and *no Fire* as yet; because with the Ancients, the evolution of man, and the growth and development of his spiritual and physical senses, were subordinate to the evolution of the Elements on the Cosmic plane of this Earth."

The First Race, having neither astral nor physical bodies of its own, *never died*. Its "Men" melted gradually away, becoming absorbed in the new forms of the Second Race, more solid and physical. This race was endowed by the incarnating Gods with the first primitive germ of intelligence.

"The Third Race became the Vahan of the Lords of Wisdom," and it was at the end of the Third Race that the physical body was fully formed. The early Third Race was "holy and pure, as yet devoid of an Individual Ego," and possessed "passive capacities only."

Now it may be remarked in passing that it is because the ancestors of man were ethereal and boneless, that modern scientists have failed to discover the origin of mankind. The evolutionary theories of Darwin carry us back to the time when the physical merges into the astral; the earlier period left no trace on geological strata.

As has been said, the early races were sexless, or rather first sexless and then hermaphrodite. "God created man in his own image," that is to say ethereal, spiritual, bisexual. Many ages elapsed after this period before the creation of the *man* of the *second* chapter of Genesis, who was

formed of the "dust of the ground," that is to say, who had a physical body. From the latter, Eve was formed, that is to say, he symbolizes the race which separated into opposite sexes. Then the sexual method of reproduction came into general use, the angels "fell into generation."

Prometheus brought to mankind the gift of conscious creative power on the highest plane, that is to say, after the method of "God," who said "Let there be light" and there was light. This power was understood and practised by that portion of mankind who were *ready*, who were fully illuminated by the manasic entities, and who became the Sages and Arhats.

But as all the gifts of Prometheus have their dual aspect, he conferred on man at the same time the power of conscious creation on the physical plane. This faculty was immediately used by that part of mankind who were unable to use the spiritual creative force, and the so-called "Fall" was the result.

The spiritual creative faculty is that spoken of in *The Secret Doctrine* as Kriyâshakti. "When the physical triumphed over the spiritual and mental evolution, and nearly crushed it under its weight, the great gift of Kriyâshakti remained the heirloom of only a few elect men in every age."

In *Isis Unveiled* Mme. Blavatsky speaks as follows of the creative force of the will :—

"As God creates, so man can create. Given a certain intensity of will, and the shapes created by the mind become subjective. Hallucinations they are called, though to their creator they are real, as any visible object is to any one else. Given a more intense and intelligent concentration of this will, and the form becomes concrete, visible, objective; the man has learned the secret of secrets, he is a magician."

The early races reproduced their kind in various ways before the formation of the physical body. These methods are outlined in *The Secret Doctrine*. Some of them have their counterparts in physical nature at the present day. It is stated in the *Vishnu* Purana that Daksha "established sexual intercourse as the means of multiplication" only after a series of other "modes" which are all enumerated therein. But no being lower in the scale of evolution than mankind uses creative power of any kind with full consciousness. Animals use the physical creative force half unconsciously, they simply follow instinct; it is the power of choice which marks the human stage. This power of choice is for the most part misapplied. Man uses the Promethean gift on the lowest possible plane, and then misuses it even there, yet it is still the Promethean gift, the divine force become infernal.

That part of mankind who were fully enlightened by the Promethea entities, and became the Arhats and sages, "remained in their Kaumâric condition from the beginning.'" "These elect were the germ of a hierarchy which has never died since that period."

They used the creative faculty on the spiritual plane only. As on the physical plane, this force has its two aspects. There is the natural use and the unnatural—for personal gratification. One who having acquired the spiritual creative force, uses it for personal gratification, becomes a black magician.

The unnatural use of the physical creative force has become almost universal, and is regarded by high-minded and honourable persons in ordinary life as reasonable and right, especially when it is sanctified, as they think, by marriage or by personal and exclusive devotion. Its abandonment in thought, as well as in act, is the first feeble and tentative step towards occultism. In those very rare cases where the physical creative force is used for its natural purpose only, the parents supply outward conditions, suited to the needs of advanced egos, ready for incarnation, but not attracted by an atmosphere of animalism and lust.

The prevalence of hereditary disease and the sufferings of women in childbirth are some of the karmic effects on the physical plane of the abuse of the creative power on the part of mankind in general. Animals, not having sinned in this respect, are not in general subject to disease, and the birth of their young is to them comparatively painless.

This is the lowest aspect, the physical, of the curse of Prometheus. Its mental and moral aspects are felt in addition when man realizes the unfitness of the unnatural use, yet is unable to free himself and his fellows from the animal tendencies which he and they have inherited from their parents, and which no doubt are the karmic result of their own action in past lives. These aspects of the curse do not fall upon him until he has received the beginning of enlightenment, a spark from the Promethean fire.

The gift of creative power is symbolized in the signs of the Zodiac by the sign *Libra*, which is at the turning point of the cycle of evolution. "Among the Qabbalists the necessity to continued creation and existence is called the balance."

The word *Libra* was used by the initiates to conceal its true meaning, because of the perversity of mankind in supposing that the creative faculty must refer to the sexual relation and nothing else. But the Eastern Occultists consider the sexual relation "as a *Karma* pertaining only to the

mundane relation of man, who is dominated by illusion;" they realize its impermanent nature, pertaining to the outward form only.

Originally, only ten signs were known exoterically, *Libra* being omitted, and *Virgo* and *Scorpio* being written as a double sign. Mme. Blavatsky says:—"The true Sabean astrological doctrine secretly taught that within this double sign was hidden the explanation of the gradual transformation of the world, from its spiritual and subjective into the *two-sexed* sublunary state." *Virgo* refers to the spiritual creative power; *Scorpio* to the physical; *Libra* to man who receives the Promethean gift and chooses which aspect of it he will use. *Virgo* symbolizes the world in its subjective condition; *Scorpio*, "the degradation of the whole universe in its course of evolution downward, from the subjective to the objective."

Of this course of evolution Mme. Blavatsky says:—"From an impalpable ideal *thought* under the creative Will of Him of whom we know nothing, and but dimly conceive in imagination, this globe became fluidic and *semi*-spiritual, then condensed itself more and more, until its physical development—matter, the tempting demon—compelled it to try its own creative faculty. *Matter* defied SPIRIT, and the earth, too, had its 'fall.' The allegorical curse under which it labours is that it only *procreates*, it does not *create*."

Spiritual creative force will not be conferred upon mankind until we have learned to use the lower force for its natural purpose only. Man must reach the highest steps of the *human* ladder before he can enter upon the next stage of development. Hence our ignorance as to what the higher force is, and the disbelief in its existence on the part of mankind generally—a disbelief less harmful in its results than the conduct of those would-be Occultists who strive to gain and use the spiritual force for their own selfish ends.

In natural development, the mastery of the lower force precedes the knowledge of the higher, all the grades are passed through. If a student discovers how to use the spiritual force when he has only mastered *a few of the grossest and most brutal aspects* of the physical, he is the "thief and robber" mentioned by Jesus "who entereth not by the door into the sheep-fold, but climbeth up some other way."

"The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.

"I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.

"But he that is an hireling and not the shepherd, whose own the

sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep.

"The hireling fleeth because he is an hireling and careth not for the sheep.

"I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep and am known of mine. As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep.

"And other sheep I have which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold and one shepherd. Therefore does my Father love me because I lay down my life that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father."

Persons are often ignorant of the *human* lessons which are learned in the sexual relation, and by means of parental experience. Marriage is therefore often a training by which the candidate is fitted for Occultism, if the necessary experience has not been gained in previous lives. We must learn the lesser mysteries before we can learn the greater. Especially is marriage needed for any who may think in their ignorance that the physical creative force of nature is contemptible and vile.

Such an one is at the foot of the *human* ladder, and has to learn step by step to purify his mind, by passing through many stages of experience, until he finally becomes fitted by a complete understanding and mastery of the lower force to learn the meaning of the higher. If the infernal aspect of the lower force is the only one which he understands, then would he assuredly be able to comprehend the infernal aspect only of the spiritual force.

When a life of celibacy is adopted from any selfish motive, from a desire to escape the cares and responsibilities which accompany married life, from a blind and ignorant disregard of the needs of another—when a man or woman dares to say in his heart to another, *I am more holy than thou, therefore I will not help thee in thy need*—then does such an one sever himself by wrong method from the stream of human life.

And since those who are really free are very few, but those who suppose themselves to be free are many, the voice of the people is in the main correct when it regards the taking of a vow of celibacy as a wrongful and unnatural act. For in the vast majority of cases known to history, such vows have been found to be harmful rather than helpful, to be either broken in secret, or to be more productive of black magic than of true Occultism.

The candidate is only really free when he has learned through many lives to devote himself to others in the ordinary personal relations of human life; and a man or woman who is patiently fulfilling these is in the stream of natural development, while one who cuts himself off from them before his time, is unnatural, and in every way a hindrance to the true and healthy progress of others.

The ordinary man or woman, who believes that personal ties are going to last for ever, is less pernicious than these would-be magicians.

The blindness of the former is a natural result of their stage of development, and will disappear in due time. The perverted views of the latter are naturally regarded with suspicion by all persons of judgment and common sense. They have taken themselves out of the stream of human development, not to help that development, but to please themselves.

Those critics of the Occult teachings who object to the putting forward of the celibate state as an ideal for human life, are therefore perfectly right. As far as ordinary life goes, it is not in most cases desirable. It only becomes helpful at a very advanced stage of evolution, of which these critics have no knowledge. They do not believe that this stage exists, and this disbelief is less disastrous in its consequences than a premature stampede towards so-called Occultism, which must end either in some very unhealthy condition, or in the practice of black magic.

It is he who has been faithful in a few things who becomes fitted to be ruler over more. It is they who have lived unselfishly in the ordinary personal relations of human life that become fitted for a wider field of service.

Many are the men and women who learn unselfishness for the first time through and by the means of an attachment to another, which on this plane assumes a sexual form.

In the lowest Heaven says that gifted writer, Olive Schreiner, *sex reigns supreme, in the higher it is not noticed, but in the highest it does not exist.*

The beginner who would enter Heaven, enters first the "lowest," for by degrees does the soul grow, it cannot rise at one bound from the depths of selfishness to the highest Heaven. Wiser are they and more helpful to humanity, who thus enter the "lowest Heaven" than those who thinking to clothe themselves with the garment of freedom remain bound by the bonds of egotism.

Not by freedom from personal ties maintained *for selfish motives* do men and women become fitted for the "higher heaven" where sex is "not noticed." In this higher Heaven some few live by nature, owing to their karma; blessed are they among their fellows, they carry an atmosphere of

purity wherever they go; for others, those only now ready for the lowest Heaven, it must be reached by unselfish effort of one kind or another, and generally by the discipline of married life.

Others again cannot even enter the lowest Heaven, for they dishonour sex, turning it aside in many ways from its rightful use and purpose, using it as a stepping-stone to power, to the satisfaction of vanity, to indulgence in every kind of sensual gratification.

Then again there are the would-be magicians, who having overcome *what they call love*, and being too gross of nature to be capable of a high and noble passion, think themselves fitted for occultism.

Few indeed are those who are ready to enter the higher Heaven.

And if the teachings of Theosophy are to become widely useful, we must be very careful how we lay undue stress on the existence of an ideal, which very few are ready to understand aright. We must not "create confusion in the understandings of the ignorant." While the ideal must be publicly put forward, in order that it may reach the few who are ready to grasp and understand it, we must not be surprised or indignant when it is treated by the many with suspicion, anger or contempt. Better such treatment than the attempt of the ambitious to enter upon a course of development for which they are in every way unfit! The blindness towards any further ideal is in some cases nature's protection to those not strong enough to bear the conflict which the true carrying out of that idea involves. This blindness may even exist in those who have been on the path in past lives, but are at present working in physical matter so dense that they have not been able to make the light of truth shine through it. Let us not then regret this blindness which in some cases is useful, and may at any moment disappear, and let us not endeavour to force the light on any who may be unwilling to receive it. We must still proclaim the truth in order that those who have ears to hear may hear. And since we have no means of knowing where the few are to be found to whom this teaching is as a saving light, we must even sow the seed broadcast. If any need it not or try to show that such teaching is harmful,—peace be with them! We beg pardon for having been obliged to disturb them in order to reach the others. When they announce that such teaching is pernicious for all, that criticism is good and useful. Let all sides be heard. It will not deter those who really need the teaching from accepting it. And to these the world's opinion of their personal character is a matter of indifference.

Another of the gifts brought by Prometheus to mankind—one having like the others its dual aspect—was the gift of Karma. Mme. Blavatsky

says :—" Lucifer is Divine and terrestrial Light, the Holy Ghost and Satan at one and the same time . . . and the Astral Light, the manifested effects of the two who are one, guided and attracted by ourselves, is the Karma of Humanity, both a personal and an impersonal entity." Karma is at once our Teacher and our punishment, and is needed in both aspects at our present stage, until mankind is ready to be freed from the vulture of greed and desire, which is ever gnawing at his heart. Primordial man, in his state of irresponsible innocence, was not subject to Karma ; it comes with the individualising process, with the realization of separate existence. It is a result of the power of choice, the exercise of free-will. It inheres in the Manasic principle, " the golden thread of continuous life " which lasts through successive incarnations.

Mme. Blavatsky alludes to the seventh seal in the *Book of Revelation*, as throwing light on the Promethean myth. Its deeper meanings are doubtless hidden from us, yet something can be gathered from what lies on the surface.

We read that when the fifth angel sounded, a star fell from heaven unto the earth, " and unto him was given the key of the bottomless pit."

The fifth angel appears to refer to manas as the fifth principle, the Prometheans being manasic entities.

" And he opened the bottomless pit, and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace ; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit."

What can one add to this by way of comment ? Lucifer, the morning star, who fell from heaven, did indeed " open the bottomless pit," when he conferred on man the gift of self-consciousness, which enables him if he so choose, to give himself to the service of his lowest passions, of his most brutal tendencies. This is evident in the mental and psychic atmosphere of our time,—" the smoke of the pit," rising from the fire of evil passion in the earthly nature of man.

" And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth ; and unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power.

" And it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree ; but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads."

The vegetable kingdom was excluded from the curse, not having any kâmic elements in its nature. The animal kingdom is not mentioned, it feels the result of the fall indirectly, the change being transmitted downwards from man ; but the curse falls most heavily on those men " who have not the seal of God in their foreheads."

" And to them it was given that they should not kill them, but that

they should be tormented five months: and their torment was as the torment of a scorpion, when he striketh a man."

"And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them.

The "five months" perhaps means that the torment ceases when the sixth principle is fully roused to self-consciousness, the lower self being then burned out. "Like ourselves masters have wept though they do not now weep." (Letters that have helped me. P. 22.)

The verses recall the cry of David:—"As with a sword in my bones mine enemies reproach me, while they cry daily unto me *Where is thy God*"?

The meaning of this descent into hell on the part of the human Ego—which must ever remain incomprehensible to us in our ordinary state of consciousness—is suggested by Mme. Blavatsky in *The Secret Doctrine*, when she speaks of the absolute never-erring law "plunging Spirit deeper and deeper into materiality on the one hand, and then *redeeming it through flesh* and liberating it."

Again, she says that after man has received his external form from the Lunar Pitris, the Solar Pitris, or Manasaputra give him their essence, "which later on becomes the Human Higher Self owing to the *personal exertion of the individual*." It appears to be this element of personal exertion, which the contact with matter supplies. In the *Key to Theosophy*, the human Ego is spoken of as "dîvine in its essential nature, yet not pure enough to be *one with the 'All'* and having to therefore pass *individually* and *personally* through every experience and feeling that exists in the manifold or differentiated Universe."

The spiritual enlightenment of mankind by means of the Manasaputra was a gradual process extending over many thousands of years. It was an evolution on the part of humanity, a change which occurred to each part of mankind as it became ready.

We read in the Stanzas that the third Race "created the Sons of Will and Yoga, by Kriyâshakti it created them, the Holy Fathers, Ancestors of the Arhats." And Mme. Blavatsky adds that Kriyâshati is "that mysterious and divine power, latent in the *will* of every man, which if not called to life, quickened and developed by Yoga-training, remains dormant in 999,999 men out of a million, and so gets atrophied."

The first result of the enlightenment was that man became conscious of his divine nature. The fall into matter not being at this stage fully accomplished, the veil between the outer and inner man was more easily put aside. Men did not ask at that time for *proofs* of the existence of the Universal Spirit. Its existence was known to all.

"No sooner had the mental eye of man been open to understanding, than the third race felt itself one with the ever-present, as also the ever to be unknown and invisible All, the one University Deity. Endowed with Divine powers, and feeling within himself his *inner* God, each felt that he was a Man-God in his nature, though an animal in his physical self. The struggle between the two began from the very day they tasted of the fruit of the Tree of Wisdom; a struggle for life between the spiritual and the psychic, the psychic and the physical. Those who conquered the lower principles by obtaining mastery over the body joined the Sons of Light. Those who fell victims to their lower natures became the slaves of Matter. From Sons of Light and Wisdom, they ended by becoming the Sons of Darkness. They fell in the battle of mortal life with Life Immortal." Mme. Blavatsky speaks elsewhere of the psychic faculties, now abnormal, which were universal in those early times, probably for the same reason that animals can now sometimes perceive clairvoyantly that which is hidden from men. The human intellect was not fully developed, so as to mask the psychic faculty.

"Civilization has ever developed the physical and the intellectual, at the cost of the psychic and spiritual. The command over, and the guidance of one's own psychic nature, which foolish men now associate with the supernatural, were with early Humanity innate and congenital, and came to man as naturally as walking and thinking." The psychic faculties are lost as the fall into matter is accomplished; later on when humanity begins to emerge from the human stage, they reappear in a higher form. The pre-human or animal stage may be roughly described as that of physical clairvoyance, the latter as that of spiritual intuition. The human stage is the furthest removed from the Source of all Life, the blindest to unseen influences, the most deeply imprisoned in matter. But it is a stage which must be passed through before further growth can take place. The physical reasoning faculty has to be developed and used before it is superseded by the higher faculty of divine wisdom.

The wickedness and perversity which accompany the *man* stage of development is an obvious fact which has troubled writers of all ages. Sometimes, seeing the comparative harmony which reigns in all the lower kingdoms, we are half inclined to regret that we cannot sell our birthright for a mess of potage.

Wordsworth says:—

"The blackbird in the summer trees,
The lark upon the hill,
Let loose their carols when they please,
Are quiet when they will.

With nature never do *they* wage
A foolish strife; they see
A happy youth, and their old age
Is beautiful and free.

But we are pressed by heavy laws
And often, glad no more,
We wear a face of joy because
We have been glad of yore."

And Walt Whitman:—

I think I could turn and live with animals, they are so placid and self-contained;
I stand and look at them long and long.
They do not sweat and whine about their condition;
They do not lie awake in the dark and weep for their sins;
They do not make me sick discussing their duty to God;
Not one is dissatisfied—not one is demented with the mania of owning things;
Not one kneels to another, nor to his kind that lived thousands of years ago;
Not one is respectable or industrious over the whole earth."

These passages express the natural yearning of the human heart to escape from the discord, which is the necessary accompaniment of self-conscious existence as we know it. The converse truth is given by Tennyson:—

"I envy not in any moods,
The captive void of noble rage,
The linnet born within the cage,
That never knew the summer woods.

I envy not the beast that takes
His license in the field of time,
Unfettered by the sense of crime,
To whom a conscience never wakes."

The poet is right. Conscience never *does* wake in the beast, and that is why he cannot progress. The light of conscience proceeds from *Buddhi* the sixth principle, the spark from the Over-Soul. It becomes active through the awakening of Manas, it requires the *self-conscious* principle supplied by Manas in order to become operative.

Mme. Blavatsky says:—"It is at this point" (the fourth cycle or Round, the human stage) "that the Cosmic Monad (Buddhi) will be wedded to, and become the vehicle of, the Âtmic Ray; *i.e.*, Buddhi will awaken to an apperception of it (Âtman), and thus enter upon the first step of a new septenary ladder of evolution."

In the pre-human stage the Monad is individually unconscious; in its cycle of evolution it proceeds from the unconscious to the conscious stage.

We read:—"No purely spiritual Buddha (Divine Soul) can have an independent conscious existence, before the spark which issued from the pure Essence of the Universal Sixth-Principle—or the Over-Soul—has (*a*) passed through every elemental form of the phenomenal world of that Manvantara, and (*b*) acquired individuality, first by natural impulse, and

then by self-induced and self-devised efforts, checked by its Karma, thus ascending through all the degrees of intelligence, from the lowest to the highest Manas, from mineral and plant up to the holiest Archangel. (Dhyâni-Buddha). The pivotal doctrine of the Esoteric Philosophy admits no privileges or special gifts in man, save those won by his own Ego through personal effort and merit, throughout a long series of metempsychoses and re-incarnations."

"To become self-conscious, Spirit must pass through every cycle of being, culminating in its highest point on earth in Man. *Spirit per se* is an unconscious negative *abstraction*. "Its purity is inherent, not acquired by merit; hence as already shewn, to become the highest Dhyân Chohan, it is necessary for each Ego to attain to full self-consciousness as a human, *i.e.*, conscious, being, which is synthesized for us in Man."

"Starting upon the long journey immaculate, descending more and more into sinful matter, and having connected himself with every atom in manifested space—the Pilgrim, having struggled through, and suffered in, every form of Life and Being, is only at the bottom of the valley of matter, and half through his cycle, when he has identified himself with collective Humanity. This *he has made* in his own image. In order to progress upwards and homewards, the 'God' has now to ascend the weary up-hill path of the Golgotha of Life. It is the martyrdom of self-conscious existence. Like Vishvakarman, he has to sacrifice *himself to himself*, in order to redeem all creatures, to resurrect from the many into the One Life."

The final mission therefore of Prometheus, who supplies the manasic principle to mankind, is to awaken to consciousness Buddhi, the light of conscience, the Inner God. When not roused to self-consciousness he is the "Akâsha" of *The Secret Doctrine*, the "Yliaster" of Paracelsus, the "Will in Nature" of Schopenhauer. Awakened, he is the "Christ" of the Christian mystic, the "Warrior" of *Light on the Path*, the "Master" of the *Voice of the Silence*. His awakening is the merging of the human stage of development into the Divine.

It brings with it the power to use the spiritual creative force mentioned above, it gives mastery over the hidden forces of Nature. It is "the knowledge of what is good to do as to right discrimination of good from evil." It "leads a man to that power, through which he can do the good he desires, often without even apparently lifting a finger." The reason why we do not possess this power as some others do is, that we have preferred to "sit down in the mud" as Mme. Blavatsky says, instead of using the faculties we possess.

In one aspect, it is the "Desire which first arose in *It* which is the

primal germ of mind." *Cosmic Desire*, the ceaseless striving of Nature towards perfection. As Kâma is the motive force of the Lower Manas, this Universal Abstract Motion is the motive force of the Higher Manas. It is *Impersonal*—the opposite pole of the desire which proceeds from the personal self. As an earthly man moved by Kâma, brings into existence physical bodies, so does a man moved by the cosmic force generate spiritual sons. On all planes the "Will is moved by desire," "As above, so below."

Mme. Blavatsky says of Buddhi as an active principle, that it is "an electro-spiritual force, a creative power which when aroused into action, can as easily kill as it can create." And again:—"It is an electric fiery occult or Fohatic power, the great pristine force, which underlies all organic and inorganic matter."

As said above, the force has its two aspects, the creative and the destructive, and this is why its nature cannot be revealed to us. It has many manifestations and many names. We read:—

"The chaos of the ancients; the Zoroastrian sacred fire, or the Antusbyrum of the Parsees; the Hermes-fire; the Elmes-fire of the ancient Germans; the lightning of Cybelè; the burning torch of Apollo; the flame on the altar of Pan; the inextinguishable fire in the temple on the Acropolis, and in that of Vesta; the fire-flame of Pluto's helm; the brilliant sparks on the hats of the Dioscuri, on the Gorgon's head, the helm of Pallas, and the staff of Mercury; the Πυρ ἄσβεστος (asbestos fire); the Egyptian Phtha or Ra; the Grecian *Zeus Cataibates* (the descending); the pentacostal fire-tongues; the burning bush of Moses; the pillar of fire of the *Exodus* and the burning lamp of Abraham; the eternal fire of the bottomless pit; the Delphic oracular vapours; the sidereal light of the Rosicrucians; the Akasa of the Hindu adepts; the astral light of Elephas Levi; the nerve-aura and the fluid of the magnetists; the *od* of Reichenbach; the fire-globe or meteor-cat of Babinet; the psychod and ectenic force of Thury; the psychic force of Sergeant Cox and Mr. Crookes; the atmospheric magnetism of some naturalists; galvanism; and, finally, electricity, are but various names for many different manifestations, or effects, of the same mysterious, all-pervading cause—the Greek Archœus or Αρχαῖος."

And again:—

"It is this day termed by the Theurgists and Occultists the *Living Fire;* and there is not a Hindu, who practices at dawn a certain kind of meditation, but knows its effects. . . . And in this appellation of *Living Fire* we may also discover the meaning of the puzzling sentence in the *Zend Avesta:* there is *a Fire that gives knowledge of the future, science, and*

amiable speech : that is to say, which develops an extraordinary eloquence in the sybil, the sensitive, and even some orators."

Eliphas Levi calls it the "Imagination of Nature," and says that it is through it "that all the nervous centres secretly communicate with each other; from it—that sympathy and antipathy are born; from it—that we have our dreams, and that the phenomena of second sight and extra-natural visions take place. * * * It is directed by the Egregores, *i.e.*, the chiefs of the souls who are the spirits of energy and action." Mme. Blavatsky adds that it "*is the body of those spirits themselves and their very essence.*"

Again, we read that "after Pralaya, the first that re-awakens to active life is the plastic Akâsha;" and that Akâsha is "creative in its physical nature," that "in the creative condition it is called the Sub-Root; and in conjunction with radiant heat it *recalls dead worlds to life.*"

Also that the Occultists apply Akâsha to practical purposes "connected as this world-soul is with all natural phenomena known or unknown to science."

The appearance of the "Living Fire" to the early Christians is described in simple and vivid language in the story of their experiences as we have it.

"And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.

"And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance."

We are told again that "Akâsha, in her highest form, is the Egyptian *sevenfold* Heaven." Students will no doubt see the meaning of this, which cannot be given here. Mention is made of "the Maruts," "the swift moving deities," who are "*only another aspect, or a development of the Kumaras,*" and it is said that Diti, the mother of the Maruts, is one of the terrestrial forms of this "Egyptian sevenfold Heaven," the latter being also described as the "sixth principle of *metaphysical* nature, the Buddhi of Akâsha." Also the mother of the Maruts represents at one and the same time, "the Divine Soul in the ascetic, and the divine aspirations of mystic humanity towards deliverance from the webs of Mâyâ, and consequent final bliss."

What has all this to do with Prometheus? Very much, if the reader will think it out, but only a partial explanation can be given.

The Kumaras or "virgin-youths" are the Promethean entities who "refused to create" physical man, but afterwards supplied the physical forms created by their brethren with the element of mind, of self-conscious-

ness. The statement that the Maruts or *Storm-Gods* are only another aspect or development of these entities appears to mean that they are the same entities considered as animated by the Cosmic Living Fire. They are Manas enlightened by Buddhi. They are the saviours of mankind who have become vehicles for the Divine Energy.

How do these Maruts come into existence? Their mother, we are told, is the Divine Soul in the ascetic, the divine aspirations of mystic Humanity. The meaning of the former the student has to find out for himself; the meaning of the latter is clear. Aspiration, the directing of the conscious human will towards "that face of the True Sun, now hidden by a vase of golden light," brings into existence the force which saves mankind.

The Maruts are animated by the "Spiritual Fire" which "alone makes of man a divine and perfect entity." It is represented in Alchemy by *Hydrogen*. Its opposite pole is Kâma (also represented by hydrogen), "the principle of animal desire which burns fiercely during life in Matter resulting in satiety; it is inseparable from animal existence." The mission of the spiritual alchemist is to transmute the base metal into pure gold, and hence the Kumaras are said to be the "howling and terrific *destroyers of human passions and physical senses*, which are ever in the way of the development of the higher spiritual perceptions, and the growth of the inner eternal man."

Erôs, in his primitive sense, is "the Divine Will or Desire of manifesting itself through visible creation." He is the Spirit of Life-giving in its abstract sense. His correlatives are human passion and physical desire. These latter are the natural accompaniments of the human stage of life, but are extinguished by the former when it awakens to self-consciousness, as the sun puts out a fire.

The Cosmic Creative Fire in its self-conscious form is personified in the Puranas under the name of *Narada* or Pesh-Hun, *the Spy*. Mdme. Blavatsky says that Narada is the "great enemy of physical procreation," the executor of the universal decrees of Karma . . . the mysterious guiding intelligent power, which gives the impulse to, and regulates the impetus of Cycles, kalpas and universal events, ... the inspirer and leader of the greatest heroes of this Manvantara."

He "tempts by suggestion" in order "to serve and guide universal progress and evolution." Perhaps this is why he is called the Spy. The meaning appears to be that the transition from the human stage of evolution to the first rung of the next ladder *must be real*, and cannot be counterfeited.

Narada, for refusing to marry, and for persuading others to "remain holy ascetics," was cursed like the Kumaras to be reborn as a man.

Mdme. Blavatsky says that "Nârada is *the* Deva-Rishi of Occultism *par excellence*, and the Occultist who does not ponder, analyse, and study Nârada from his seven Esoteric facets, will never be able to fathom certain anthropological chronological, and even cosmic mysteries."

Narada appears to be the essence of the Maruts, and therefore Prometheus in another aspect. He is Prometheus *when freed by Hercules.*

The torture of Prometheus endures until the coming of Hercules, the strong hero. The latter, having slain the Nemean lion and cleansed the Augean stables, having slain his passions and cleansed his heart from impurity, having performed all the other preliminary labours, finally overcomes, and drags up to the surface of the earth by main force, the dog which guards the gates of hell. He slays the vulture which gnaws at the heart of humanity, he frees mankind from the Promethean curse.

Human passions are strong, but the Evolutionary Force of Nature is stronger than they, and if man once awakens it in himself to self-consciousness, it sweeps away with irresistible force every object from its path.

The rousing of it to self-consciousness is the work of the Manasic aspect of Prometheus, for without the help of Manas, it is unconscious on this plane.

The candidate is told in *Light on the Path* to *look for the warrior* who cannot fail in battle, but must be victorious always.

The whole object of Raja Yoga is the awakening and rousing to action of this Inner Fire, which, when awakened, burns out all impurity from the human heart, and forces the personal man in whom it is manifested to live a life in harmony with nature.

Thus there are two main aspects of initiation in the Cycle of Evolution.

The first is the awakening from the animal stage, the stage of ignorance and innocence, an initiation bringing discord, suffering and sin. The second is the awakening to full self-knowledge, the realization of Universal Brotherhood, the coming of the Christ. Nature is ever at work adjusting the pairs of opposites, balancing opposing forces, producing final harmony.

The self-conscious Monad is spoken of in the *Anugita* as "the seat abiding in the self, where dwells the Brahman free from all," the indestructible "principle" which is "beyond the perception of senses," the "Vaishvânara fire *sevenfold*" which "blazes in the midst of the life-winds, which move about in the body and swallow up one another." We read again:—Manu declares himself created by Vaishvânara, the Spirit of Huma-

nity, which means that his Monad emanates from the never-resting Principle in the beginning of every new Cosmic Activity. And in the note:—"Vaishvânara is, in another sense, the living magnetic fire that pervades the manifested Solar System. It is the most objective (though to us the reverse) and ever present aspect of the One Life, for it is the Vital Principle."

The self-conscious Monad is the "Unknown God" spoken of by Paul, in whom "we live and move and have our being" who "dwelleth not in temples made with hands", but "giveth to all life and breath and all things." He "hath made of one blood (blood=life), all nations of men, for, to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation." (Narada and Karma.) "That they should seek the Lord if haply they might feel after him and find him, though he be not far from every one of us."

"It is again the "Living Water" which Christ offers to the woman of Samaria. "Whosoever drinketh of this water" (earthly passion) "shall thirst again; but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him, shall never thirst, but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." The woman saith unto him, "Sir, give me this water that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw."

It is the "Water of Life" of Revelation:—"And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb," (lamb=purity and innocence). "And whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely." It is truly "Alpha and Omega, the first and the last," that from which we emerge, and that to which we return.

It is the "Watcher" of which Mme. Blavatsky speaks in *The Secret Doctrine*, the "Initiator," the "Great Sacrifice," who "holds spiritual sway over the *initiated* Adepts throughout the whole world." And again we read "the silent Watcher and his Shadow (man) becomes more strong with every change." And "the Watcher and his shadows are one." Yet "the Monad of every living being—unless his moral turpitude breaks the connection, and he runs loose and astray unto the Lunar Path—to use the Occult expression—*is an individual Dhyân Chohan, distinct from others, with a kind of spiritual Individuality of its own* during one special Manvantara."

The awakening to self-consciousness of the Monads is spoken of in the Stanzas as "the Day, *Be with Us*, when thou shalt rebecome myself and others, thyself and I." "Then the Builders, having donned their first clothing, descend on radiant Earth, and reign over men who are themselves."

The meanings of the Promethean myth are endless, and only a few of them have been roughly outlined in the present paper. Light comes by pondering over the hidden meaning which ever escapes expression in words.

"What," says Mme. Blavatsky, speaking of it, "is the complete truth as well as the Esoteric meaning about this universal myth? The whole essence of truth *cannot be transmitted from mouth to ear.* Nor can any pen describe it, not even that of the Recording Angel, unless man finds the answer in the sanctuary of his own heart, in the innermost depths of his divine intuition, ...

"Therefore we can give it only from its philosophical and intellectual planes, unlocked with three keys respectively,—for the last four keys of the seven that throw wide open the portals to the mysteries of Nature are in the hands of the highest Initiates, and cannot be divulged to the masses at large,—not in this century at any rate."

And elsewhere she says:—

"The Promethean myth is a prophecy indeed; but it does not relate to any of the cyclic Saviours who have appeared periodically in various countries, and among various nations, in their transitionary conditions of evolution. It points to the last of the mysteries of cyclic transformations, in the series of which, mankind, having passed from the ethereal to the solid physical state, from spiritual to physiological procreation, is now carried onward on the opposite arc of the cycle, toward that second phase of its primitive state, when woman knew no man, and human progeny was created not begotten.

That state will return to it and to the world at large, when the latter shall discover and really appreciate the truths which underlie this vast problem of sex. It will be like *the light that never shone on sea or land*, and has to come to men through the Theosophical Society. That light will lead on and up to *true spiritual intuition.*

Then as once expressed in a letter to a Theosophist:—

The world will have a race of Buddhas and Christs, for the world will have discovered that individuals have it in their own power to procreate Budda-like children—or demons. When that knowledge comes, all dogmatic religions, and with these the Demons will die out."

C.

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PLETHORA.

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PLETHORA.

As Theosophy teaches us that regeneration should take place upon three planes, physical, psychical, and spiritual, I am devoting myself chiefly to the lower phase, for as we have to live upon earth in a physical body it is plainly our duty to make our instrument not only a clean one but also an efficient one, because as no good music can come through a cracked instrument, so has spirit difficulty in expressing itself through an unclean diseased body. It is a popular idea among Americans that we are a nervous race of high thinkers, wearing ourselves out by intense activities faster than the waste can be repaired. Labouring under this idea, we are all more or less prone to attempt to repair this waste of nerve force, as it is called, by consuming as much as we can of the abundance of the excellent food bestowed by a kind Providence on a prosperous country. The watchwards are "Nourish" and "Build up the strength." They are preached and practised by physicians and laity alike, until the principle has become so deeply grounded, that nearly everyone believes that the more nutrition a person can take the better. As a result we eat too frequently, and often largely in excess of the needs of the system, and as a result we develop a condition of plethora, which predisposes to headache, colds, bronchitis, pneumonia, rheumatism, asthma, diabetes, heart trouble, apoplexy, and obesity. This last is a disease like the others, and should be treated as such. In fact, all our national type, the lean, lank brother Jonathan, is fast disappearing from our midst, and giving place to the uncomfortable, rotund, and unwieldy corpulence which prepares the victims for gout and apoplexy.

I will define at the outset that plethora means a superabundance of blood in the system, and is manifested by a distention of the blood vessels and a feeling ofgeneral torpor or heaviness of the system. In this condition there is less water and more red corpuscles than in healthy blood. It is always caused by excessive feeding; and though present in all cases of obesity, it is also frequently met with in the non-corpulent.

The habit of our people is to eat three or four meals a day, and at each a little, if not very much, in excess of the needs of the organism. The food is usually well seasoned with salt, pepper, and other condiments which are calculated to make the secretions flow freely; and frequent eating keeps the food constantly passing over the absorbent surfaces. The last process of digestion is the passage of food into the circulation from the smaller intestines, which are supplied with millions of hair-like projections called villi, through which the food, or the product of the food as originally

taken into the mouth, must pass; and here is just where the harm is done.

Plethora enough to show itself in a cold, according to my theory of colds, which I have written on elsewhere, does not occur from overeating from one meal, but a long course of eating too often, every time slightly if not a good deal in excess of what the system requires for repair and nourishment.

Obesity is not induced by one or two hundred meals, but by a series, which keeps the food constantly passing over the absorbent surfaces, until, little by little, layer after layer, the surplusage is deposited in fatty tissue or other diseased conditions. It has long been supposed that fat persons are the most healthy because the person is freer from colds and other conditions of plethora while the fat is in the process of forming. When the absorbent surfaces of the intestines can select just the amount of nourishment needed to replace the wear the remainder is thrown off as waste, and no superfluous fat or disease is formed. On the other hand, when just a little in excess of the needs of the organism is selected by the absorbent surfaces, the excess is converted into fat; and when at last no more fat can be taken on, it is retained to distend the blood vessels, and to be thrown off in colds, catarrh, pneumonia, and other disorders due to the condition of plethora.

When the whole system has become plethoric, the work of the heart is increased and its action becomes difficult; hence the lungs accumulate disease and are called on for more effort and become congested and inflamed; the liver also enlarges from overwork, and the kidneys suffer from the impurities constantly passing through them; while gradually the surplusage is deposited about the muscles, until the entire body becomes stiff and heavy as even very old persons need never be if they conform to the laws of health. When this point is reached life becomes unendurable, and the physician is sought.

Here we come back to the principle I have just mentioned. The patient must be "built up"; for of course he is weak and exhausted from the overworked organs of digestion that have gradually involved all the other organs, and he is treated as though in danger of starvation.

In the case of lean people everyone is ready to see that the organs of digestion are at fault, as of course they are; but this is not so evident a fact in the case of the corpulent; though when we consider that the lightest eaters eat vastly in excess of the actual requirements of the system, we can understand that the organs of digestion are also at fault in the obese. Both emaciation and obesity are due to mal-assimilation of food; and plethora, acute or chronic, belongs to each condition, and is the source of acute and sudden illness in the one as in the other.

It is ruinous to the digestion to treat obesity by dieting or by the use of

cathartics ; and besides where apparent loss of flesh has resulted, the dieting must be kept up or the obesity will return.

The avoidance of plethora is simple—too simple, perhaps, it may seem at first sight : it involves a real desire for a person to be sound in body and mind, some little exercise of will, and the patience to form a good habit. When impure food and impure air are taken into the system, disease is Nature's method of eliminating them. In this sense we should welcome disease as a blessing, and consider its warnings and benefit by its lessons. When we learn to really listen to nature, mankind will have made a great stride forward. Much is said of "assisting nature," and "leaving it to nature," but this is not done enough. The physician who is summoned by the presence of disease recognises only dimly, if he recognises at all, that in disease nature is exercising her healing powers, that the system is ridding itself of impurities ; but what the patient expects of the physician, and what the physician too often thinks it his part to do, is to prevent and interfere with nature's remedial action, until he with his drugs compels nature to capitulate.

It will be the aim of the doctor of the future to stand by and prevent all obstacles to the working of the healing forces of nature, to move the cause of disease, and point out the road to perpetual health. Nature gives us the lesson how to avoid plethora and its attendant train of ills, and it is to eat pure food and in sufficient quantities to repair the waste and repair the system. It might be asked, "What are pure foods?" and "What is a sufficient quantity?" To the latter question, I will answer that many persons will be surprised and incredulous to learn how small a quantity is needed daily to repair the used tissue.

The appetite was made pleasurable that the needs of the system should not be neglected ; therefore, man should not destroy this pleasure and blunt the exquisite sense, and finally die in disease and suffering, by eating three or four times a day of highly seasoned food, thus exciting a false and unnatural appetite. Lasting pleasures come alone from motion, from use; it may be from usingthe muscles or the mind. If the appetite for food is used merely for the pleasure it gives, the pleasure flies and leaves pain instead. How often we hear a person say, "I don't care for eating—I'm never hungry ; but I feel miserable if I go without my meals." The person who eats three or four meals daily neither enjoys food or life as much as the man who accustoms himself to eating twice a day. If he eats often of stimulating food (and if the food was not stimulating he would not desire to eat often) he has to keep on eating, although not hungry, else he suffers from that "All goneness and gnawing" so often complained of. The person who feels weak and exhausted without food imagines it is strength he is seeking in food ; but in reality it is the stimulus he seeks.

Whenever we move a muscle, we wear out tissues that are replaced by others; and this is a vital function. Food eaten must first be converted into material for muscular tissues, and must replace worn tissues before it can give strength; and physiologists say that this process requires hours, consequently the food that gives immediate feeling of strength is stimulating in its action, and not necessarily strength-giving.

This bring us to the question of what are pure foods. Animal flesh is not pure food. It affords as much if not more stimulus than it does strength. Inasmuch as our tissues are built up from the food we eat, they may be made pure or filthy according to the selection we make in choosing our nutrition. Surely we may not hope to build up pure tissue matter from the diseased and rapidly decomposing corpses of animals—the very character of such food is abhorrent to the spiritual nature. The flesh of animals must be highly seasoned to take off the smell of the blood and raw taste of the dead flesh, and such seasoning and the rapidly digesting food itself creates appetites for stimulants and nicotine, and unnatural lust and passion which kills all that is spiritual within us. Flesh eaters are never safe from dangerous illness or sudden attacks from disease. Persons who eat only unstimulating food have a reserve force of strength, and can skip a meal or two without any discomfort. I know it is not popular to arraign animal food—even less popular than to preach a moderate if not abstemious diet; but it is a truth that must become known and believed some day, that all flesh food, all animal food, is impure, and is not intended for man's proper sustenance, but on the contrary is poisonous to his system. Its impurities are patent. The process of putrefaction begins in animal tissues the moment life is extinct. The putrefaction is not apparent to the unaided senses until further advanced; but it exists, and when taken into the human system breeds disease. If I were to tell half I know, that has come under my own observation, of beef and hogs sent hurriedly to market before the cholera should break out, one of the lot being loathsomely ill, so that it was known all the rest were infected, very few persons would like to take such risks as possibly to eat a lot of such beef or pork. Animals fattened for the market are liable to many diseases and are infested by parasitic worms. No doubt healthy sound meat may always be found in a market: but the best of meats are not suited for human consumption, however much man, under the popular delusion, may assert that flesh eating is necessary for the preservation of his strength. Pure Graham flour alone contains all the elements necessary for prolonged nutrition, and with fruit, even apples alone, health and strength are assured. How much suffering would be spared if the poorer classes as well as the rich understood this fact. The man who lives upon bread and fruit will get more happiness out of life

than he who can and does indulge himself in every luxury. The use of meats, highly seasoned as they must be with salt at least, if not pepper and other condiments, breeds low spirits and pessimism. The persons who follow my rule tell me that they have to guard against a too great exuberance of spirits and cheerfulness, for fear the rest of the world think it unnatural.

I am sure that did we not harden ourselves by the belief that the flesh of animals is essential to the preservation of man's life and strength, we could not endure the thought of the pangs suffered by the most humanely treated creatures in their preparation for market. The price of suffering is enormous. Life is sweet to every living thing; and yet persons say to me, "What were all these animals made for, if not for man's food?" I can only answer, "Such an argument is as good for the lion as it is for you." There might be some reason in requiring animals to sacrifice the life that is precious to them if it were essential to the life of man; but that it is not necessary any man can prove for himself if he will try the experiment for a reasonable time, say six months or a year. He will find that his mind and body have been crippled and poisoned by flesh eating. He will find no decrease in his strength. Recent tests of endurance and speed in long distance foot racing, between men who lived upon a strictly vegetable diet and men who lived upon the mixed diet of civilisation, in which the vegetarians won in every instance, demonstrates the fact that this food furnishes superior muscular power. I will venture to say that any one who will try the experiment of abstaining from animal food for a year, will never again use it. The experiment has to be continued long enough for the taste to return to its normal and unperverted condition, and then comes such serenity, such a sense of security from disease, freedom from torture and incessant thirst for stimulation, that the effort of will used at first is amply repaid, and life becomes worth living.

When I first began living upon vegetable food I was an inveterate user of tobacco and had been for nine years. I had tried to break away from the habit, but always in vain; so that I had considered it was no use to try. Consequently, when I began to use pure food, I continued the use of tobacco as usual. After six months I became conscious that my tobacco did not satisfy me, and I changed the brand, thinking something must be wrong with the weed. The new brand was just as unsatisfactory, and I tried several before it dawned upon me that the difficulty was within myself, and that as my sense of taste became more normal, the liking for this abnormal stimulant departed of itself. The freedom from such a habit would, I am sure, be like taking a heavy chain from a man's neck.

In treating the opium habit, I have always found the battle won where the patient accepts a pure, unstimulating diet. I myself believe that fruits

and nuts are the best food for man, and I am convinced that a man can live upon them, enjoy perfect gustatory pleasure, and keep all his mental and bodily faculties in the best working order, thereby producing perfect health.

In experimenting with foods, I have lived upon fruits and nuts for seven years, and my son, now a man of twenty-four years, made the experiment with me. In both instances the results were most satisfactory. No one knows of the exquisite and delicious variety of fruits until they eat them with nuts alone. On adopting this diet some care as to the amount taken at first is needed, until the digestive organs can act perfectly upon it. For a short time there is a rapid loss of flesh, with dislike for the food; but this phase soon passes, for the appetite and the flesh are restored. My son, who has been brought up hygienically on pure food, did not lose flesh on this diet, and it satisfied him completely. While living on this diet, he was pursuing his studies, taking vigorous exercise in the gymnasium, and was the equal of the strongest lads. An interesting fact of his dietetic habits is that, although inheriting imperfect teeth, his own have remained sound, and are as white and perfect as could be desired.

Without question I think this the best diet for man; but there is a compromise diet of fruit, vegetables and cereals that will purify the system and render it comparatively free from plethora and its diseases. Anyone who tries it, will soon find that no gustatory pleasure is missed by giving up animal food; but I will give a note of warning to the person who might, happily for himself, feel inspired on reading this to begin a diet without flesh, that mushy foods not requiring mastication should be avoided. Nothing so weakens the digestion and the teeth than the not giving them enough to do. The system fails to get proper nourishment from fine white flour and the soft cooked foods that are so popular. Prevention is so much better than cure that I have left what I have to say about the cure of the disease of plethora to the last. I believe there is a cure, and a specific cure. It is simple, and yet one that sounds somewhat severe to unwonted ears: so that I feel I must break it gently to the reader through the medium of a few personal reminiscences of how I reached my theory of plethora and its cure.

From early childhood I had suffered from an inherited and intense facial neuralgia. I lived in a malarial district, and I came of an English family of "heavy eaters," and up to the age of twenty-one I followed the family customs. A list of the ailments I suffered from would be too long and tiresome. Suffice it to say I suffered and was miserable from colds, catarrh, bronchitis, and dyspepsia. Once while in this unhappy state I had gone to a farmhouse, hoping for relief, or cure from the change; and while looking about for some diversion for my mind, I found a book

entitled *Esoteric Anthropology*. I turned over the pages idly, wondering what it was all about, when I saw the words, "Pure food makes pure blood; and from pure blood no disease can come." These words were to me like one of those sudden lights that oftentimes come to men from the most trivial things and in the most unlooked for circumstances. I returned home and from that time forth devoted myself to experimenting in foods, and to studying medicine from Nature's standpoint as well from the standpoint of the schools. I was met with jeers and cries that I should lose all my strength and become a charge to my family, and that the food I was eating was only intended as a relish for meats; but I persevered, and after a year or so of experience in foods, and the quantity taken, making careful notes, I had the satisfaction of proving in my own person that a man can change from a state of suffering to that of health and strength, with all his faculties of mind and body active and ready for use and enjoyment, if he nourishes himself with pure food in sufficient quantity, and without eating too often and to excess.

After regaining health I went to Colorado to seek my fortune, and having lost it in mining speculations instead of finding it, fate took me again to the pursuit of my predilection, and I found myself studying medicine in Oakland, California. During the second year of my medical course, I accidentally discovered that a certain plant, of which I make no secret to those who are competent to use my discovery—had the peculiar property to control the nerves of the stomach, thereby preventing hunger. I did not know enough then to attach much value to my discovery, although it interested me, and I made several experiments with it upon myself and members of my family. Not long after this the failure of specific remedies to do the work expected of them was brought to our notice by our Professor of Practice and I began to meditate and speculate on this. He warned us not to rely upon certain medicines in every case for the reason that for some unexplained cause medicines failed at certain times and in certain cases to produce the usual effect or any effect at all, and that the patient either dies or his disease becomes chronic despite the physician's efforts. While listening one day to this professor, who was lamenting this fact, it came to my mind that this failure of medicines to act always the same, and as they had been known to act before, might be due to the interference of the digestive organs in the performance of their functions, and that if the patient could abstain from all food, a medicine might become a specific. I mentioned this idea to the professor, who was disposed to think that food in the process of digestion might interfere with the action of medicine; but he declared that to abstain from food would be impossible, and that in disease the waste was so great that unless a patient could be well nourished, he would die while waiting for the action of the remedy. Here was a

chance to utilise the peculiar theory I had discovered, and I told my professor about this too, but he was not inclined to attach any importance to what I thought might be a useful discovery.

The idea took possession, however, and before very long I found a person in such desperate straits of illness that she was ready to try any experiment that offered hope of relief. Should any one desire I will give the name and the address of this my first patient, the first of a goodly list of proof I have had of the correctness of my theory. The sufferer was a German lady who had had asthma for fifty years, rheumatism and neuralgia for many years and she was at that time prostrated from an attack of valvular insufficiency—a disease of the heart. There was a general collapse and the examining physician pronounced the case was hopeless, and said that unless the stomach could be stimulated to accept food the patient would die very soon—in any event would not last six weeks. In defiance of this opinion, the lady having become my patient was put by me upon a fast. All food was taken from her but she felt no pangs of hunger, the medicine I gave perfectly controlling the nerves of the stomach. I assisted the system in the work of depletion by the use of sweat baths; and to the surprise of everyone but myself, this hopeless case was slowly restored to health. She fasted for many days, during which time I watched her carefully, and at the end of six weeks, the extreme limit of time given her for life, she was free from all symptoms of heart failure, asthma, œdema and rheumatism. By means of this nutrient, and specific remedies, I have been able to cure diabetes in all its forms and stages, and although I have treated many cases of that fatal disease, heretofore so-called, I have never had a failure—the disease both in young and old has promptly yielded to my remedies. I have failed in about 20% of my cases of Bright's disease, but am confident now, that by selecting my cases of Bright's disease I can very greatly lessen that percentage. In diseases of the heart, where there is difficult breathing and dropsy, my treatment has never failed me.

There is no science in treating a full blooded patient as though he were dying of starvation. Since my first case above cited, I have had plethoric patients abstain from all food, taking only my nutrient, for forty, fifty, sixty and, in one case, for eighty days, taking vigorous exercise in the meanwhile, and have had the pleasure of seeing them restored to health and normal weight at the end of the cure, which had to be followed for some time by a strict diet. I have also had patients, rapidly wasting from marasmus, which is simply the result of mal-assimilation of food, fast for twenty days with excellent results.

But I must speak no more of patients or cures of my own, and I apologize for this much, only having introduced them to prepare the way

for saying that in my experience plethora, with its train of disease from the simple cold, the forerunner of so many serious illnesses, all the way to the more complicated cases of plethora, can be cured by abstaining from food for certain periods of time, more or less prolonged as the case may require, with the intelligent administration of specific remedies, and leaving nature free to do her work of purification. Were this condition of plethora better understood, we should not so often be called on to mourn the early loss of many great men of our nation.

We must all have in mind a recent celebrated case. The patient was plethoric, a high liver, above his normal weight, and taking little exercise. His blood vessels became more and more distended until the overworked heart, having its heavy load of blood to pump through the veins, collapsed, A physician understanding plethora would have known that his duty was simply to wait until the surplus was consumed before giving the patient more food. The stomach acting in sympathy with the heart refused food; but following the prevailing idea that above all things a person must be nourished, even if he is dying of too much nourishment, a desperate effort was made to stimulate this patient's stomach to receive food, and triumphant bulletins announced that there was some hope for the dying hero, since he was taking forty ounces of nourishment in twenty-four hours. From this moment I knew the case was hopeless. It is a known fact that four ounces or less of assimilated food will repair the waste of a person's system while working actively. How, then, can it be expected that a weakened digestion and heart would be able to dispose of such a surplus? It is like choking a fire that burns low by piling on coal, the fires were choked and the flame went out for ever.

When men understand the theory of plethora and realise its importance sudden death from disease will be a thing of the past. There will be little need of doctors, or at most they will be employed to keep the patient in health, which should be indeed the true work of a physician. A person can recognise his own symptoms, but if he persists in living contrary to Nature's laws the physician may be called in to watch his health and help him to pull up at the first sign of plethora and allow Nature, the great restorer, to work relief.

When the old methods fail, look for the new.

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The above article is published at the special request of the Countess Wachtmeister, who feels that there are many among the suffering to whom it may prove helpful.

FREEWILL AND KARMA.

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Make pleasure and pain, gain and loss, victory and defeat, the same to thee, and then prepare for battle, for thus and thus alone shalt thou in action be free from sin.

Those who have spiritual discrimination call him wise whose undertakings are all free from desire, for his actions are consumed in the fire of knowledge.

Even if thou wert the greatest of all sinners, thou shalt be able to cross over all sins in the bark of spiritual knowledge.—*Bhagavad Gîtâ.*

THE problem of free will, that is to say, the question as to how far that choice which we appear to exercise in our conduct and actions, is actually a free choice or only a necessity, bound and conditioned by causes which lie beyond our reach on this plane of consciousness, is one which we cannot hope to solve, simply because we cannot get at the plane of causes, because the plane on which we live is almost wholly a plane of effects, and we are not therefore in possession of the necessary factors which should go to make the equation.

But though we cannot determine specifically, in reference to any of our actions, to what extent we are bound or free, there are some considerations which we cannot neglect, entering into the question of that free choice which we are conscious of exercising, and which we do exercise, however much our philosophy may prompt us to fatalistic conclusions. For the veriest fatalist does act as if he had free choice in some matters; we have to admit the apparent freedom, and act as if it were a real freedom, however much we may postulate a deeper necessity as the real determining power.

I would make two divisions of the subject, (*a*) the actual problem as to how far, if at all, we are free to act in one direction or another; (*b*) what should be our mental and philosophical attitude towards life itself, in view of the limitations imposed upon us by necessity.

(*a*) I use the term necessity as synonymous with Karma in a restricted sense. Karma is the law of action. All effects are the results of previous action, and the law which counterbalances the cause and the effect, the law which makes action and reaction equal and opposite, is the law of Karma. This law teaches us that our present life is determined and conditioned on every hand by necessity; that certain forces are operating in the moulding of our life and destiny, because these forces were

set in motion by us in previous incarnations. I am speaking now, of course, of our individual life, in so far as it differs in its circumstances from the individual lives of our fellow-men; for there is also the deeper necessity of our human nature as such, by which we have to share in the Karma of the whole race.

The following quotation from the *Secret Doctrine*, vol. i., p. 639, sets this forth very clearly:

> Those who believe in *Karma* have to believe in *destiny*, which from birth to death every man is weaving thread by thread around himself, as a spider does his web. . . When the last strand is woven, and man is seemingly enwrapped in a net-work of his own doing, then he finds himself completely under the empire of this *self-made* destiny. It then either fixes him like the inert shell against the immovable rock, or carries him away like a feather in a whirlwind raised by his own actions.

It should be observed that this implies choice as well as necessity; but when the choice has been made, when the die has been cast, there is no longer any room for free will in that particular direction. It may seem to some, however, that this will land us in the deepest depths of fatalism, that it will involve us ultimately in a chain of cause and effect from which there is no hope of escape, that it will finally leave no room whatever for any freedom of choice. There is much to be said for the extreme necessitarian view of the matter, for that philosophy, if such it can be called, which regards choice as a mere matter of habit, or of likes and dislikes engendered by heredity and environment, over which we have no control. I hope to be able to show, however, that this view of the matter may be quite consistent and accurate, even when pushed to its extreme limit, and yet it is in harmony with the deeper teachings of Theosophy, which undoubtedly does leave room for the exercise of free will within the limitations of Karma; but which further shows the way of escape, "even if thou wert the greatest of all sinners."

The question is really one as to the action of Karma, as to how far the Karmic effect of an action may reach. Now Karma is cause and effect, but the effect may be either proximate or deferred. The action of Karma, therefore, is intimately associated with the transfer of energy to a higher plane, where it may remain latent for a long period of time, but will ultimately become the determining power in a new series of actions on the plane of effects. We shall see therefore, that the Karmic effect of any action, in so far as it becomes a determining power in our future lives, must be exactly in proportion to the transfer of energy to a higher plane which is associated with that act. Neglecting for the time being the higher spiritual planes of Atma-Buddhi, and dealing

only with the mental plane, we may say therefore that the Karmic effect of any action is just in proportion to the extent to which we can bring our mental powers to bear upon that act; because by exercising the mind in the act, we produce on the mental plane a corresponding dynamic effect. Now this is practically saying that the more we are conscious of freedom of choice, and the more we exercise our mental powers of discrimination in reference to any particular action, the greater and more far-reaching will be the Karmic effects. We all admit that an irresponsible action does not merit the same reward or punishment as one done with deliberate intention. Further we make allowances for the state of society and environment. The act of killing and eating an enemy cannot be regarded in the same light when it is performed by a savage, as it would be if done by a member of a civilized community. Now, we are bound to associate with the law of Karma the idea of absolute justice. Where there is no choice there is no responsibility, and where there is no responsibility there can be no Karmic penalty.

Let us suppose, for instance, that some act in one incarnation, say the act of wilful murder, has thrown a man back by its Karmic effect, into an environment of cruelty and violence. Let us suppose that it has thrown him back into a savage community, where it is the right thing to kill and eat your neighbour. In due time, perhaps, the man himself is killed and eaten by a stronger neighbour. But there the Karmic effect ends. Like produces like: the man by the murderous thought which he cherished in the previous incarnation has been attracted in the next to a corresponding environment. For remember that it was not the *act* of murder that produced the Karmic effect, but the *thought* of murder which the man cherished, which produced the dynamic effect on the higher plane, and was therefore carried forward to another incarnation. But in this new incarnation the act of killing is not associated with a dynamic mental effect, with a choice between right and wrong. It is the law of the community to kill, the savage knows no better, unless you succeed in awakening within him the dormant moral faculty; therefore the same act in this incarnation, the act of killing, does not carry forward a Karmic effect. Or take as another illustration the case of the hereditary criminal, the man born with the "criminal brain." It may be impossible for us to determine in any particular case to what extent, if at all, the man is responsible for his criminal acts; but we cannot postulate the same Karmic effects from any particular criminal act of such a man, as we should for one who had a normal brain, and whose associations were not criminal. The criminal himself is the Karmic effect of some previous act on the part of the Ego. The Ego is punished by being forced into an environment of criminal heredity for one or more incarnations: but in so far as it has now only a criminal brain to

work through on this plane, it is to that extent irresponsible on the higher plane for the criminal acts, though it may suffer on the lower plane during a long series of Karmic effect.

It is impossible for us to apportion the Karmic merit or demerit which may attach to the acts of any individual, or even to our own acts. It may be that in many cases, even where there appears to be a deliberate choice, there is in reality a deeper necessity governing that action. But we can at least postulate that the retributive action of Karma will only extend to that circle, however limited it may be, where there is really freedom of action. Nor will it avail us to excuse our actions on the plea of necessity. We may deceive ourselves, but we cannot deceive the immutable LAW.

Now it is quite conceivable that although every action can be traced back, in the ever-widening circle of infinity, to some ultimate necessity—the whole manifested universe being itself the "son of necessity"—yet within certain limits, within the limits that condition any particular plane, there may be perfect freedom of action. Moreover it would appear, from the considerations of the action of Karma just educed, that freedom of action is obtained just in proportion as the higher principles are able to act on the lower; or in other words, just in proportion as action on the lower plane is governed by interaction with a higher plane. Man is higher than the animals, he has so much more freedom to work with and through physical laws, just in proportion as he brings to bear upon these laws the rational thinking principle, Manas. And above Manas is Atma-Buddhi; but these principles being as yet only latent in us, we are not responsible above a certain plane.

It is conceivable, therefore, that though an act must produce a specific effect in a smaller or wider circle, and though we may postulate an ultimate or deeper necessity governing all action, yet within certain limits there may be freedom on all planes of action; there may be necessity in the mass, so to speak, but freedom in the individual units of the mass. Thus, individually, we are powerless to resist the great stream of evolution which is gradually moulding humanity into something ever higher and higher in the scale of consciousness; yet we may have power to turn back against that stream, and by so doing generate a Karma which, for a certain number of incarnations, will produce results which we will call evil. The evil, however, is only relative to the small circle in which we are free to exercise a choice; it stands as good to the larger circle where necessity operates, because it is the corrective which, sooner or later, brings us back into line; which, indeed, prevents us from escaping altogether from the great cycle of necessity of our humanity as a whole.

And just as we may thus conceive of the working of both free will and necessity in our individual lives, so we must also conceive the operation of

the same principles in those higher intelligences which operate on the more universal planes of consciousness, those hierarchies whose conscious intelligence gives rise to the manifested universe in all its aspects. The universe is the "son of necessity," because it is the Karmic result of the *action* of these intelligences, of whom man is part, and of whose essence he partakes in his various principles. The conscious choice at some particular period, by such intelligences, will be fraught with Karmic effects on humanity which will last for millenniums untold. The *Secret Doctrine* gives us the record of such Karmic effects.

Thus good and evil, free will and necessity, are intimately related. Everywhere throughout the universe we can trace the operation of these; and the one law that binds and harmonizes them is, KARMA.

(*b*) The second division of our subject takes us at once to a higher region. We leave behind us the question as to how far we are in our individual action conditioned and limited by Karma; nay, we are even able by that deep spiritual insight which Theosophy gives us, to rise above the action of Karma itself. "*Even if thou wert the greatest of all sinners, thou shalt be able to cross over all sins in the bark of spiritual knowledge.*"

What is this spiritual knowledge? It is the realization of our own divine nature, of our oneness with the SUPREME, of the SELF within us; and the working out of our life, the constant reference of all our thoughts and actions to this HIGHER SELF. It is what is called in the *Bhagavad Gîtâ* "Devotion to the Supreme Spirit," or more simply "Devotion."

The *Bhagavad Gîtâ* is divided into chapters, each of which gives a phase or aspect of this Devotion. The book itself is the book of the 'Science of the Supreme Spirit," or the "Book of Devotion." An understanding of its teachings, and a realization of its principles, brings about true liberation; for only when all our actions are consumed in the fire of the selfless SELF, shall we "in action still be free from sin." But we must note what is the nature of this freedom to which we are to attain; and if we collate the various passages in the *Bhagavad Gîtâ* bearing upon this, we soon find that it differs most essentially from the popular notion of freedom. It is not freedom to choose between our likes and dislikes. It is not freedom to turn this way or that at our own pleasure, to choose between the pleasurable sin or the painful duty. It is not freedom from conditions nor freedom from action; but it is freedom from *attachment* to these.

> Make pleasure and pain, gain and loss, victory and defeat, the same to thee, and then prepare for battle, for thus and thus alone shalt thou in action still be free from sin.
>
> Be free from the "pairs of opposites" and constant in the quality of Sattva, free from worldly anxiety and the desire to preserve present possessions, self-centred and uncontrolled by objects of mind or sense.

Let then the motive for action be in the action itself, and not in the event. Laying aside all desire for any benefit to thyself from action, make the event equal to thee, whether it be success or failure. A man enjoyeth not freedom from action from the non-commencement of that which he hath to do; nor doth he obtain happiness from the total abandonment of action.

Therefore perform thou that which thou hast to do, at all times unmindful of the event; for the man who doeth that which he hath to do, without attachment to the event, obtaineth the supreme.

We have seen that by reason of our own individual Karma, and also by reason of those deeper Karmic effects which lie utterly beyond our reach, and of which the manifested universe is the expression, we are bound and conditioned on every side, and forced into actions which it is conceivable we might repudiate if we had absolute free will in the matter. Now it has been commonly supposed that since Karma results from action, if we could be actionless we should also be Karma-less. This idea gave rise to the Yoga or contemplative school of philosophy, where it is endeavoured to free the individual from rebirth, and obtain union with the Supreme through inaction and constant meditation. Krishna admonishes Arjuna, however, that liberation cannot be obtained by this means. The true method is right performance of action without attachment to the result; for by this means the Ego is liberated from the illusion of self in connection with any particular chain of cause and effect, and no further room is left for the Karmic action which gives rise to that illusion of personality which constitutes our series of incarnations.

Krishna, speaking as the supreme Spirit, says of himself:

"*There is nothing in the three regions of the universe which it is necessary for me to perform, nor anything possible to obtain which I have not obtained; and yet I am constantly in action. . . . All actions are effected by the qualities of nature. The man deluded by ignorance thinks, 'I am the actor!' But he who is acquainted with the nature of the two distinctions of cause and effect, knowing that the qualities act only in the qualities, and that the Self is distinct from them, is not attached in action.*"

Inaction defeats its own ends, because although we are for the moment to choose between action and inaction, yet there is a deeper necessity, a deeper law which impels all things, even the supreme Spirit to action. Inaction, then, in so far as that inaction is a non-performance of that which it is the law of our nature to perform, becomes a "sin."

The term "sin" must not be confounded here with the Christian theological sense of the word. It means simply the transgression of the natural law of our being, using the term natural in its fullest and widest

sense, to include the whole of our being, and not making any artificial distinction between "natural" and "spiritual." It is the province of artificial systems of theology and ritual to make artificial sins. All religious devotees, of whatever creed, have some special rules of conduct which it is a "sin" to trangress. When we have reached that larger knowledge, however, which liberates us from all artificial systems, the only law which we recognize is a *natural* one, operating on all the planes of our being, and producing physical, mental, moral, and spiritual conditions, to which we must conform if we would be free from "sin."

There is a further idea, however, attached to the term "sin," as used in the *Bhagavad Gitâ*. The deepest law of our being is our real and essential oneness with the Supreme Being. All that serves to dissociate our consciousness from that oneness, all that produces in us the sense of separateness, is therefore evil; it is "sin." Religion *(re-ligo)* is that which binds us back to our real Being, that which dispels the illusion of separateness and personality. Religion, therefore, must be a natural process, in the fullest sense of the term. Now that which separates us from the universal, that which gives rise within us to the idea of the particular, to the idea of time, space, personality, and all other finite concepts, is our attachment to and identification of ourselves with a certain sequence of cause and effect. At the present stage of our evolution we have the consciousness of a personal "I," which is individuated and distinct from other "I's." That sense of "I" is associated with a certain sequence of cause and effect on the physical plane, that sequence being the aggregate of innumerable lesser units of consciousness, constituting the various organs and cells of our physical body. We do not identify our sense of individuality with every particular cell or molecule of our body. Those cells or molecules live out their own independent lives, their own sequence of birth, activity, and death, and it is the aggregate and sequence of them which go to make up that larger unit of consciousness, which for the time being we call "I."

Now just as each individual man is thus the macrocosm to his own world of microcosms, so the Supreme Spirit is the macrocosm, the one unit of consciousness, to which our individual Egos stand in the relation of microcosmic units. We shall be able to see now why non-attachment to the fruit of action brings about our final salvation, by enabling us to attain to the Supreme. Attachment to the fruit of action generates the Karma which identifies us with a certain sequence of cause and effect, giving rise to the idea, "I am the doer," "I am the actor," "This is mine," etc. It gives rise to the "illusive appearance of the marshalling of events and actions on this earth." But when we have recognised the identity of our own soul with the "over-soul"; when we have recognized

the oneness of our real spiritual nature, which is not born and does not die, with the Supreme Spirit which IS throughout Eternity, then the illusions of sense life fall away from us, it is no longer "I" who am born and die, who suffer pleasure and pain, who am "bound upon this wheel of change." And yet it is I. It is the larger I which is the HIGHER SELF.

Foregoing self, the Universe grows "I":
If any teach NIRVANA is to cease,
Say unto such they lie.

It is "I," burst from the prison bonds of sense. In that prison I moved from life to death, and death to life, chained to my former actions.

But now,
Thou Builder of this Tabernacle—Thou!
I know thee! Never shalt thou build again
These walls of pain,
Nor raise the roof-tree of deceits, nor lay
Fresh rafters on the clay.

We find a reflection of "this same exhaustless secret, eternal doctrine," in the Christian scriptures also. Strip away the personal element which makes Jesus of Nazareth the Logos, and the theological dogmas of original sin and vicarious atonement, which make our damnation an arbitrary punishment, and our salvation an equally arbitrary reward, instead of a natural process, and the doctrine is identical. For it is neither Jesus of Nazareth nor Krishna, as *personalities*, who are the Saviours of the world. But Christ (not Jesus), Krishna, and the Logos, are one and the same. They are but different names for "the light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world." And that light, however dimmed by our sense life on the physical plane, and by error and perversion of priestcraft on the intellectual plane, is still the light of the Supreme Spirit burning in the inner sanctuary of our own immortal nature. It cannot shine upon us from outside; we need no salvation at the hands of a personal creator.

Within yourselves deliverance must be sought;
Each man his prison makes.

But when we have apprehended this indwelling Christ, Krishna, Logos, Supreme Spirit, call it what you will, we turn from the illusions of sense life, and place our feet on that PATH which leads us back "*from the other shore.*"

But the journey is still before us; we have to cross over all that load of accumulated Karma which we have been gathering to ourselves in our wanderings from incarnation to incarnation in the illusive fields of Mâyâ. And this we do by the power of this same indwelling spirit. This we do

"in the bark of spiritual knowledge," such as all great teachers have revealed, such as constitutes the *Esoteric Doctrine*. For though we must work out our past Karma to the last vibration, we now patiently endure that which happens to us of good or ill. No longer attached to the fruit of our actions, we do not carry forward the account to a new incarnation.

"*Those whose souls are in the Spirit, whose asylum is in it, who are intent on it and purified by knowledge from all sins, go to that place from which there is no return.*"

What is this freedom, then, which we shall finally attain? It is the freedom of our whole nature, the freedom of the whole universe. All things are lawful to us then, though all things may not now be expedient, as St. Paul puts it. All things are lawful, because we ourselves have become the LAW; because being united with the Supreme Spirit, and knowing it as our own SELF, we shall say with Krishna:

"*There is nothing in the three regions of the universe which it is necessary for me to perform, nor anything possible to obtain which I have not obtained; and yet I am constantly in action.*"

The Jews tried to kill Jesus because he made himself equal with God. But this is the *Esoteric Doctrine*, whether taught by Jesus or by Buddha; and the exoteric religion of forms will always seek to kill the esoteric religion of spiritual freedom.

But like St. Paul we have still to say: "Not that I have already attained, or am already made perfect." It is not a question as to what we are now, but as to what we shall be, when through the power of that Supreme Spirit which dwells in all, and which draws all things back to itself in the great day "BE WITH US," we have risen triumphant at our final initiation.

Such is our high doctrine, such is the power through which, even now, we are "more than conquerors."

W. KINGSLAND.

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Philosophy and Ethics of the Zoroasters.

By ALEXANDER WILDER.

(*Reprinted from the Journal of the American Akadêmê, November*, 1885.)

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PHILOSOPHY AND ETHICS OF THE ZOROASTERS.

By Alexander Wilder.

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"God is the ground of all existence, and theology is the highest Philosophy."—*Aristotle.*

Sir William Jones, in his sixth anniversary discourse as President of the Asiatic Society in Bengâl, February 19th, 1789, making the Ancient Persians his theme, and citing the *Dabistan* for his authority, describes the primeval religion of Erân as identical with what Sir Isaac Newton declared to be the oldest of all religions: "A firm belief that one Supreme God made the world by his power and continually governed it by his providence; a pious fear, love, and adoration of him; a due reverence for parents and aged persons; a fraternal affection for the whole human species, and a compassionate tenderness even for the brute creation."

A faith so simple and pure is profound and ethical enough for the most exacting moralist, as well as the most philosophic schoolman. It leaves little more to be said by way of explanation or supplement. There is a saying that the learned have the same religion, but never tell what it is. We may feel very certain, however, that this brief formula affords us the solution. Yet we have no occasion to suppose that any unworthy motive inspires their silence, or even undue carefulness to refrain from bestowing treasures upon those who know not the value. Rather is it the reason of Timaios, the Lokrian, as given by Platô: "To discover the Creator and Father of this universe, as well as his work, is arduous; and having discovered him it is impossible to reveal him to the many." The apocalypse may be made only to those who understand with the heart, as well as perceive with the other senses.

Other writers have tried to show us that a simple faith, like this described by Mohsan Fani, was characteristic of the Aryan tribes of Upper Asia. Michelet would make us believe that there were no castes, no mages, no kings, among the archaic Persians; the father of each household was mage and king to all belonging to it; the fire on the family altar-hearth received their homage as being the symbol of the life-imparting spirit; the domestic animal was beloved and magnanimously treated according to its rank; the man revered himself as necessary to the universal existence.

When their theology was first devised goodness was the cardinal principle. The Wise One, leader of the heavenly host, carries on the conflict of ages against the Dark Intelligence, not to hurt but to save his adversary. The battles are all without bloodshed or cruel violence. Every act that beautified the earth, that extended the field of usefulness, that wrought the suppression of hatred and the predominance of goodness, was a conquest.

"Let every one this day, both man and woman, choose his faith," cries the great Zoroaster, standing before the altar. "In the beginning there were two—the Good and the Base in thought, word and deed. Choose one of these two; be good, not base. You cannot belong to both. You must choose the originator of the worst actions, or the true holy Spirit. Some may choose the worst allotment; others adore the Most High by means of faithful action."

"The clear moral note, prominent through the whole cycle of Zoroastrian religion," says Miss Frances Power Cobbe, "has here been struck. The 'choice of Scipio' was offered to the old Erânians by their prophet three thousand years ago, even as it is offered to us to-day. 'Choose one of the two spirits. Be good, not base.'"

A religion like this is personal and not public, a subjective living rather than an instituted mode of worship. No wonder that this noble faith, so ancient that we only guess its antiquity, maintained its life through all the centuries, passing the barriers of race and creed, to permeate all the later world-religions. We find its features in them all, its name and utterances translated into their numerous dialects, yet possessing the essential flavour of this primitive origin.

It was in the nature of things that it should meet with adversaries. This has been the history of every world-religion. The various neighbours of the early Erânians were incessantly making hostile incursions. The tillage of the earth, which was a cardinal merit in their belief, was a constant invitation for attack. We find allusions to these conflicts all through the earlier Zoroastrian scriptures. The Erânians were first brought into collision with the freebooting nomadic tribes of their own Aryan stock; and then with the Skythic and Mongol hordes, the Jins and Turanians from beyond the Oxus. Besides these came other and more dreadful foes, the Semitic conquerors from the West. Their impure rites and atrocious cruelties are still commemorated in the legend of Zohak, the Serpent-King, who required a daily sacrifice of children for his repasts. The afflicted people of Erân languished for centuries under the yoke of the detested foreigners. Then, according to the legends, there arose Thraêtaono or Feridun, a youth nurtured in the ancient faith, who called an army together and expelled the oppressors. Doubtless, however,

this is an old mythic parable; for the Persians themselves for centuries commemorated the achievements of Gah, the blacksmith, as their emancipator, and made his apron their banner.

This much is historically true: There was an uprising through Ayraland, and the chieftains of Persia became men of war. "I march over the countries," says the sacred hymn, "triumphing over the hateful and striking down the cruel." Everywhere the temples of the Serpent-worship were destroyed, and idolatrous rites were prohibited. The Assyrians had cast the idols of other countries into the fire in the name of Asshur; the Persians melted the statues of the gods in the name of Ahura. In the wars with Greece the religion of Mazda contended for mastery over the worships of Apollo, the Assyrian Dionysos, and Dêmêtêr, but was arrested in its progress by the defeat at Salamis. It had, however, been more fully victorious nearer home. It displaced Bel and Assur from the Pantheon, and led the Hebrews to set aside the Hittite divinities Seth and Astartê for the purer faith of the God of Heaven. This name and its parallel, the God of Truth, are renderings of the titles of the Persian divinity. But more notable was their adoption of the designation Yâva, the occult name of Raman, the Assyrian Genius of Intellect. The completeness of the revolution among them is indicated by an unknown Hebrew prophet:

> "Is there a God beside me? Yea, there is none!
> A Rock I have not known,
> Framers of graven images are all of them emptiness. * *
> I am Jehovah [Yava] doing all things,
> Stretching out the heavens by myself,
> Spreading out the earth— * *
> Who saith of Cyrus: 'My Shepherd,
> And all my delight he doth perform.' * *
> I am Jehovah [Yava], and there is none else,
> Forming light and producing Darkness,
> Making Peace and producing Evil:
> 'I am Jehovah [Yava] doing all these things.'"

We need only to change the reading to the Persian designation of the Supreme Being, and this would be a very exact outlining of the original Zoroastrian doctrine. Every hymn chanted in the Parsi worship and every prayer is an acknowledgment of the Divine goodness and justice personified in Ahura Mazda.

It has been remarked that the whole religion of the *Avesta* revolved around the person of Zoroaster. The Supreme One speaks only to him out of the midst of the fire, and commands him to teach the pure doctrine to the Erânian people. We find in this a memorable revelation like that of

Moses. The Sacred Law of Ahura Mazda inculcated the obligation to truth in speech and action, the superior merit of industry, and goodness transcending all. Words so divine could not be ascribed to a man speaking from his own understanding. The Erânian sage is therefore always represented as uttering only oracles given to him by the Divine Being, and the collection, of which we now possess but fragmentary remains, is named the *Avesta*, or Revealed Wisdom.

It can hardly be proper to ascribe the origin of the Mazdean worship and philosophy to any single individual. History has seldom preserved the memorials of the beginning of a religious faith. Great thoughts are afloat in the spiritual atmosphere, and so are apprehended by all who are in the suitable condition of mind. Religions are generally, more or less, outgrowths from older faiths, differentiated by the genius of the peoples and individuals by whom they are embraced. This is illustrated in the example afforded within our own historic period. The faith established by Mohammed had been already taught by the Hanyfs, and he at first only declared himself to be of their number. He was of an hysteric constitution, and the subject of powerful spiritual impressions. The religion of Islam of which he became the expositor was founded on the dogma that God is one, and that good works constituted the purest worship. A great apostasy took place after his death, which was suppressed by violent measures, but the men who had been his adversaries became the dominant party. They gave the final shape to the new faith, adding many notions from the Persian and Semitic religions. To the creed of the Erânians was given their new reading: "There is no God but Allah, and Mohammed is his Apostle." The symbolic allegory of the Bridge of Judgment was plagiarised from the *Avesta*, also that of the existence of numerous races of jins and other superhuman beings, good and evil.

The endeavour has been made to show a Buddhistic influence in the origin of the Mazdean religion. The historian, Ammianus Marcellinus, has preserved an account of a journey into Upper India by Hystaspes, the father of Darius, and his discourses with the Brachmanes, a sect of philosophers. "He was instructed by their teaching," says this writer, "in the knowledge of the motions of the universe and of the heavenly bodies, and in pure religious rites; and, so far as he was able to collect these, he transfused a certain portion into the creed of the Mages." This account is a garbled relic of an older tradition. Gustasp or Vistaspa, an ancient king of Baktria, celebrated in the *Avesta* as first promulgating the Mazdean religion in his dominions, was doubtless the personage denoted. The story indicates the great confusion of opinion existing in regard to the matter. Doctor Haug, however, forcibly repudiates the notion, and

fortifies his denial by a translation of the *Fravardin-Yasht*, in which the first Zoroaster is described as "that ingenious man who spoke such good words, who was the promulgator of wisdom, who was born before Gautama had a revelation."

It is apparent, however, that early Buddhism was also of remote antiquity. Its tenets embrace the Sankhyan philosophy ascribed to Kapila; and they can be traced, Mr. Brian Hodgson declares, into far ages and realms. Indeed the Jaina sect was older than Gautama and its last great teacher Vardhamana was his preceptor. The disciple became more distinguished than his master, and established a system of propagandism which has had nowhere a parallel in history.

Opinion is curiously divided in regard to Zoroaster. The accounts given of him in the *Avesta* are many times apparently allegorical. The dispute relates to his actual existence, to the age and country in which he lived, and the source of the Mazdean doctrine. Modern scholars assign him a period somewhat exceeding thirty centuries ago; but Aristotle and others date him back six thousand years before their own time. He is called a Baktrian, and yet is represented as a native of Rhaga, in Media, and even to have flourished at Babylon. His name is given in numerous forms and meaning. We commonly write it as Zoro-Aster, which would seem to denote the son or rather priest of the goddess Istar. Tradition has likewise set him forth as the inventor of the Magian rites, and also as an investigator of the origin of the universe and an observer of the planetary revolutions. Another account represents him in a contest with Nin or Ninip, the divine representative of the early Semitic religion; the one employing the philosophic knowledge of the Far East, and the other the Mystic learning of the Chaldæans.

Clement of Alexandria seeks to identify Zoroaster with Eros, the son of Arminios, whom Plato describes in the Tenth Book of *The Republic* as having been slain in battle, but as reviving again after some days, and giving an account of the destinies of certain noble souls as he had himself witnessed the allotment. This was probably a current tale among the later Persians. The Parsis have a book entitled: *The Revelations of Ardhâ-Viraf*, which was probably written at the time of the restoration of the Persian monarchy in the third century. It is a detailed account of scenes in heaven and hell as beheld by Ardhâ-Viraf during the visit of a week, which his soul—leaving his body for that length of time—paid to those regions.

Ammianus Marcellinus has also given an opinion as from the great philosopher. "Plato, that greatest authority upon famous doctrines, states that the Magian religion, known by the mystic name of *Machagistia*, *is the most uncorrupted form of worship in things divine;* to the philosophy of

which, in primitive ages, Zoroaster the Baktrian made many additions, drawn from the Mysteries of the Chaldæans." This account appears to have been inspired from some attempt to identify that form of Parsism in which the Magian system had become interblended, with the older mystic worship of Assyria and other countries. It is entirely invalidated, however, by the inscriptions of Darius at Behistun. These utterly denounce Magism as false, apparently ignore the existence even of Angra-mainyas, the Evil Intelligence, and simply acknowledge Ahura Mazda. This would seem to indicate that no fusion or amalgamation of worships had as yet taken place.

What little is known of the Zoroastrian religion is derived from the Sacred Books of the *Avesta*.* These show the early existence of an irreconcilable animosity between the Aryan peoples of Upper Asia. They had lived together in harmony till after the first migration, when the Erânians adopted fixed habitations and agricultural pursuits. This was followed by estrangement, and change of worship. The dævas appear henceforth as the deities of the Hindu Aryans, and as the evil demons of the Erânians.

This dissension has been compared not inaptly to that of the two brothers Cain and Abel. The latter we are told was a keeper of sheep; the former a tiller of the ground, the builder of a city, and the originator of the arts of civilised life. The analogy of the story is further confirmed by the universal fact that the agriculturist uproots the shepherd; and a more curious apparent coincidence is found in the fact that a dynasty in ancient Erân was designated the Kaianean or Cainite. Perhaps the Semitic nomads have since changed the narrative to suit their case; the chief Assyrian divinity was Bel or Abelios, and the country of Assyria fell before the armies of Persia.

This conflict of the remote ages was at its height when the movement began, which should permanently change the usages and the traditions of the Erânian people. The name of the man who carried it forward to success, is utterly lost in the mists of archaic time. We do not know the century or even the millennium in which he was born. He is characterised in the *Yasna* as "famous in the Aryan Home-Country," where both Hindus and Erânians had their first abodes. "The few philosophic ideas which may be discovered in his sayings," says Dr. Haug, "show that he was a great and deep thinker, who stood above his contemporaries, and even the most enlightened men of many subsequent centuries."

The Sacred Writings always speak of him as possessing rare spiritual

* There were 21 *nasks* or divisions, each of which was marked with a corresponding word of the Ahuna-Vairya. They were burned by Alexander at Persepolis, but collected anew under the Sassanide monarchs, and again scattered by the Moslems. The *Vendidat* and a few fragments of the others, together with the *Yasna*, *Vispered*, and *Gathas* or Hymns, are all that remain.

endowments, and living in intimate communion with divine natures. His utterances have been denominated Magic, but only in the sense of a Wisdom-religion. He never ceased to denounce the arts of sorcery and the incantations employed in the rites of the Dæva-worshippers. At that time the latter consisted of wandering Aryan tribes addicted to freebooting, and having no permanent residence. They worshipped the gods and *pitris* or ancestral spirits, regarding Indra and Varuna as superior divinities. The Erânians had discarded these, but themselves paid homage to the *Ahuras* or spirits of the eternal world.

The first Zoroaster began his reformation by introducing the Mazda, the Supremely Wise, as the chief Ahura, the "primeval spirit," the Creator of the Universe, the "loving Father," "God who is the One that always was, is and will be." In the original Zoroastrian doctrine the seven archangels or Amshaspands are not enumerated. Ahura Mazda is the source of both the Light and Dark Intelligences. "In his wisdom," says the *Yasna*, "he produced the Good and the Negative Mind. * * * Thou art he, O Mazda, in whom the last cause of both these is hidden."

There is in every one, Zoroaster declared, a good and holy will, a *positive* will of righteousness. The reflection of this good mind is its *negative* evil mind, the lower nature following its instincts and incapable of choosing aright. Sôkratês in *Theaitetos*, has expounded the problem of Evil after a similar manner. The earlier Mazdeans thus included the Positive and Negative principles in their concept of the Divine Nature, and did not thereby impair their perception of the Divine Goodness. It was natural, however, to speak of these attributes as personal essences, and this doubtless led the latter Zoroasters to treat of them as so many distinct beings.

We therefore do not find the sevenfold group of Ameshaspentas at this earlier period of Erânian development, but only modes of Divine operation. Indeed, after they had been promulgated at a later period, but two or three of them seem to have progressed beyond the simple personification of qualities. In an ancient hymn we find several of them enumerated according to this idea. "He gives us by his most holy spirits the *good mind* which springs from good thoughts, words and actions—also *fullness, long-life, prosperity and understanding*." In like manner, the evil spirits or dævas were chiefly regarded as moral qualities or conditions, though mentioned as individuated existences. They have their origin in the errant thoughts of men. "These bad men," says the *Yasna*, "produce the dævas by their pernicious thoughts." The upright, on the other hand, destroy them by good action.

Always before the mind like a beautiful and sublime prospect was the vision of the Life Eternal. A spiritual and invisible world preceded and

remained about this visible and material world as its origin, prototype, and upholding energy. Innumerable myriads of spiritual essences were distributed through the universe. These were the Frohars or Fravashis, the ideal or typical forms of all living things, in heaven and earth. In the earlier periods they were designated as psychic beings, and venerated as ancestral and guardian spirits. "This doctrine," says Professor Tielé, "recurring in one shape or another among all nations of antiquity, received among the Erânians a special development, and in a higher form was adapted into the Zarathustrian system from the very beginning." Through the Frohars, says the hymn, the Divine Being upholds the sky, supports the earth, and keeps pure and vivific the waters of preëxistent life. They are the energies in all things, and each of them led by Mithras, is associated in its time and order with a human body. Everything, therefore, which is created or will be created, has its Frohar, which contains the cause and reason of its existence. They are stationed everywhere to keep the universe in order and protect it against all the potencies of evil. Thus they are allied to everything in nature; they are ancestral spirits and guardian angels, attracting all human beings to the right and seeking to avert from them every deadly peril. They are the immortal souls, living before our birth as human beings and surviving after death. Thus, in the Mazdean philosophy, the eternal world is an ocean of living intelligences, a milky sea of very life, from which all mortals are generated, sustained and afforded purification from evil.

The human soul coming into this world of time and sense, has always its guardian, its own law or spiritual essence, in the invisible region. In fact, it is never really separated. When its term of existence in this world is over, it abides for three days and nights around the body from which it has withdrawn, and then sets out on its journey. It meets its spiritual counterpart in the form of a beautiful maiden, and is conducted over the Bridge of Judgment to the celestial paradises and into the Everlasting Light. Conversely to this, the wicked soul remains three days at the head of the corpse inhaling the hateful odour of the charnel and then goes forth into scenes of an opposite character, entering finally into the presence of the Evil One in the world of Darkness, there to abide till the final redemption and restitution.* It is predicted in the *Zamyad-Yasht* that the Good Spirit will overcome the Evil Intelligence and deprive him of his dominion.

The later Zoroasters enlarged and transformed the simpler Mazdean theology into a more complex structure. They were doubtless led to this through the influence of the Magian sarcerdotal caste of Media and

* This account is preserved in a fragment of the *Hadokht-Nask*, one of the twenty lost books, and also in the *Minokhird*, or book of Wisdom.

Assyria. Taking the analogy of the seven planets they devised a College of Seven Amshaspands or Benefices. Of these they made Ahura-Mazda first and chief. Added to these was the assemblage of *Yazatas* or angels, having Mithras for their lord. The Frohars or guardian spirits seem to have been included in this number, and were assigned to habitations in the stars.*

In the *Bundahish*, a later composition, these were supplemented and antagonised by a Council of Dævas also seven in number, analogous to the seven evil gods or angels in the lower part of the sky, of the *Assyrian Tablets*. They are Aeshma Deva or Asmodeus, the three Hindu gods Indra, Saurva or Agni, and Nayonhatya, and two others, the personifications of Thirst and Penury, with Angra-mainyas, the Dark Intelligence, as their Prince. There were also an infinitude of dævas of lower grade, and *drujas*, an order of female spirits whose chief pursuit was the alluring of good men from rectitude.

As both the good and bad angels, the arch-dævas, and Amshaspands generally were spiritual essences rather than beings existing objectively, at least during the earlier periods, they pervaded all things as the inhering elements of their nature. Good works drove away and destroyed the dævas, and the prayer Ahuna-Vairya mastered even Angra-manyas himself. The character of Evil is simply opposition; the Dark Intelligence only follows the creative operations of Ahura Mazda, producing whatever may work them injury.

Behind this twofold classification, the *Bundahish* places the sole Divine Being, Zervan, "the Ancient of Days." This Divinity appears to be the personification of Eternity itself. A religious faction introduced him into the Parsi religion in order to meet hard metaphysic problems, and it is now the orthodox doctrine.

The Zoroastrian teachings were essentially ethical, and inculcate, with pious earnestness, veneration for the pure law. By this is denoted homage to the Supreme Being, to good spirits, the guardians and benefactors, and especially to the personal protector of the worshipper. Prayer was the hearty renouncing of evil and complete harmony with the Divine mind. "To attain to prayer," says the *Yasna*, "is to attain to a perfect conscience. The good seed of prayer is virtuous conscience, virtuous thoughts, and virtuous deeds." It is recorded that Zoroaster enquired of Ahura Mazda: "What form of invocation expresses every good thing? He replied: "The prayer Ashem."† Zoroaster asked again: "What

"Purity is the highest good;
Happy he whose purity is most complete."

* It was a Pythagorean doctrine that souls came from the galaxy into the sublunary world to take up their abode in bodies.

† The *Ashem-Vohu*.

prayer equals in greatness, goodness and fitness all things beneath the heaven, the starry universe and all things pure?" The Holy One responded: "That one, O Spitaman Zarathustra, in which all evil thoughts, words and works are renounced."

Every Mazdean was required to follow a useful calling. The most meritorious was the subduing and tilling of the soil. The man must marry, but only a single wife; and by preference she should be of kindred blood. It was impious to foul a stream of water. It was a cardinal doctrine of the Zoroastrian religion that individual worthiness is not the gain and advantage solely of the one possessing it, but an addition to the whole power and volume of goodness in the universe.

The *Ahuna-Vairya*, the prayer of prayers, delineates the most perfect completeness of the philosophic life. It adds to the total renunciation the entire affiliation of the soul with the Divine.

"As Lord Supreme, he is to be adored,
As Master in righteousness,
Inspiring the holy purpose
And the actions of life
Which join the Soul to Wisdom.
So is the kingdom made Ahura's
By succouring all who are in need."

Grecian writers state that Zoroaster wrote many books. This is doubtless incorrect; for such men seldom write. Iamblichos has told us that the priests of Egypt ascribed all their books upon Science and Wisdom to Hermês. This ancient practice of ascribing works to distinguished personages renders it impossible to know the real author by the name on the book. The primitive writings of the Erânians have the title of *Avesta* or Wisdom. Appended to the *Nasks* was a *Zend* or Commentary; much of which was finally wrought into the text. The sacred literature of many different peoples and ancient faiths has thus been corrupted.

The authorship of the *Avesta* will be better comprehended when we bear in mind that the designation *Zarathustra* was a title of rank, belonging to the spiritual lords of the Erânian peoples. Every high priest was styled the *Zarathustratema*, or chief Zarathustra, and was considered as the successor of the great Spitama, and so inheriting his spirit and authority. He was superior in rank to the head of the family, the chief of the village, the lord of the tribe, and the ruler of the province. What he uttered and wrote might therefore be included in the Sacred Writings under the name of the great Sage himself. The *Avesta* as we now have it, is therefore the remains of a compilation made during many centuries, which had been destroyed and scattered under the Macedonian rulers and partially collected again in

a more or less corrupted form in the third century. The *Gathas* or hymns and the older *Yasna* are the most genuine.

The conquest of Babylon and its dependencies brought Mazdaism into direct contact with the various Semitic religions. The gross worships of the East were superseded, and the influence of Zoroastrianism became so prevalent that many writers have supposed the great Erânian teacher to have been a Chaldæan Magus. Yet there was more or less amalgamation of the two worships.

The establishment of the Judæan colony in Palestine was distinctly set forth as an enterprise inspired by the God of Heaven, Ahura-Mazda. The decrees of Cyrus, Darius and Artaxerxes recognise the same source of authority. The uprising of the Jewish people, when the Macedonian kings had suspended the customary worship at the temple and introduced the Bacchic orgies instead, indicates the same ruling motive. Never before had they exhibited a like earnest purpose for monotheistic religion. Their own historians depict the change as radical. "From a reckless, godless populace," says Emanuel Deutsch," they were transformed into a band of puritans." They had their schools of philosophy; the Pharisees and Essenès being the most celebrated. The former resembled the Stoics, the latter the Pythagoreans. They had their seminaries in Babylon and Alexandria. Following their Persian exemplars, the Pharisees now made a collection of Sacred Writings, and the works of their sages and prophets, and the Essenès compiled another to be read and expounded in their secret assemblies. Angels and evil spirits now became conspicuous in Rabbinic tradition. "The Jews," Maimonides declares, "derived all their knowledge about the angels from the Persians, during their captivity." We have the assurance of Dean Milman that the *Avesta* was "by no means an improbable source in which we ought to discover the origin of those traditional notions of the Jews, which were extraneous to their earlier system, and which do not appear to rest on their sacred records."

Herodotos has declared that no nation adopted foreign customs so readily as the Persians. Perhaps we should attribute many of the changes made by their kings to this versatility of disposition. While Darius and Xerxes acknowledged only Ahura-Mazda and the "pure religion," Antaxerxes Mnemôn proclaimed the worship of Mithras and Anahid; the one the personified fountain of living spirit from whom flowed the currents of life to the universe, and the other the chief of spirits and director of the ever-active fructifying energies of nature. Babylon was doubtless the mother of this new cultus. It was carried into Asia Minor and flourished there for centuries as an arcane religion. After the conquest of Pontos and the pirate empire by Pompey, it was introduced into the Roman

metropolis, "where," says the Rev. C. W. King, "it became so popular, as with the earlier-imported Serapis-worship, to have entirely usurped the place of the ancient Hellenic and Italian divinities. In fact," he further declares, "during the second and third centuries of the Empire, Serapis and Mithras may be said to have become the sole objects of worship even in the remote corners of the Roman world. It was the theology of Zoroaster in its origin, but greatly simplified, so as to assimilate it to the previously-existing systems of the West. Under this form it took the name of Mithras, who in the Zoroastrian creed is not the Supreme Being Ormuzd, but the chief of the subordinate powers. Mithras is the Zend title of the Sun, the peculiar domain of this Spirit, and hence he was admitted by the Greeks as their former Phœbus and Hyperiôn. In the same character he was identified with Dionysus and Liber, or Phanaces the Sun-god of the Asiatics, and his Mysteries replaced the ancient Dionysia. How important the Mithraica had become in the second century appears from the fact recorded by Lampridius, that Commodus the Emperor condescended to be initiated into them. With their penances and tests of the courage of the candidate for admission they have been maintained by a constant transition through the secret societies of the Middle Ages and the Rosicrucians, down the modern faint reflex of the latter, the Freemasons."

It may be remarked in this connection that reference to the Mithraic rites abound in the Book of *Revelation*. The rewards of those that overcome are generally like those of the successful candidates in the secret rites. The fiery dragon with seven heads and ten horns or rays of light forming a halo around them was a simulacrum of the seven-headed Serpent of Akkad and Assyria, which the Zoroastrian believers were destined to destroy. There appears to have been but little difference between the several religions in the earlier centuries of our era. Augustin of Hippo quoted the assertion of the Mithraic priests that their divinity "himself was Christian." The copper coins of Constantine bore the symbol and acknowledgment—the "image and superscription"—of the Unconquered Sun, the *Comes* or soldier; and everybody knows that the 25th of December was from time immemorial celebrated as the Birthday of Mithras. Chrysostom, speaking of the appointing of Christmas at the same time, thus explains the reason: "It was so fixed at Rome in order that while the heathen were busied at their profane ceremonies, the Christians might perform their holy rites undisturbed."

Indeed, as Mr. King remarks, "there is very good reason to believe, that as in the East the worship of Serapis was at first combined with Christianity, and gradually merged into it with an entire change of name, not substance, carrying with it many of its ancient notions and rites; so,

in the West, a similar influence was exerted by the Mithraic religion." Afterward the arbitrary decree of Theodosius I. prohibited the further observance of the worship, and the Roman pontiffs in their turn denounced it as sorcery and actual compact with the powers of Evil. Yet it continued for many centuries among the *pagans*, or country-people.

In another direction the Zoroastrian influence accomplished nobler results. Even before the conquest of Babylon, the dominion of Persia had been extended from India to the Hellespont. There appeared from this very time a new energy in speculative thinking. Wherever the Zoroastrian doctrine was introduced philosophy began a career. The Ionic and other schools dated from this historic period.

The criticism has sometimes been made that there was little of a philosophic nature in the Zoroastrian literature. We are not required to be so nice in our distinctions. The *Avesta* is everywhere ethical, and like all ancient writings essentially religious. All philosophy takes religious veneration for its starting-point. We are free, likewise, to define religion as Cicero did, to be a profounder reading of the truth. But it was held anciently to include the entire domain of knowledge. Even here, the *Avesta* was not deficient. The *Nasks* treated of religion, morals, civil government, political economy, medicine, botany, astronomy, and other sciences. The students of the Zoroastrian lore were therefore proficient scholars. Dêmokritos, of Abdera, who was educated by Persians and professed their religion, was dlstinguished as a physician and philosopher. He became no less advanced in later years in the Egyptian learning, which he endeavoured to show was similar to the Wisdom of the East.

It is stated, that Thalês, the founder of the Ionian philosophy, spent much time in Egypt and was admitted to familiar converse with the priests of Memphis. Yet his utterances are clearly Zoroastrian. Water, he declared, is the first principle of things: and God is the Intelligence that formed all things out of water. "God is the most ancient," said he, "for he had no genesis: the universe is the most beautiful, because it is the workmanship of God." He taught also that spiritual essences, intelligent and immortal, like the Frohars of the *Avesta*, pervaded the universe. Anaximenês represented the first principle as æther or divine air possessing consciousness that animated all things. All souls were of the divine substance and the body was evolved therefrom. Pythagoras elaborated the system that bears his name. He had been instructed by the Egyptian priests; yet his doctrines were essentially Zoroastrian. His biographers declared that he learned them of the sage Zaratas at Babylon. He established the first school of philosophy at Samos, and then at Krotôn, in Italy, with the peculiar characteristics of a secret brotherhood.

Hêrakleitos denominated the elemental principle Fire; which, how-

ever, was a spiritual and intellectual essence, and not a gross corporeal flame. From it all things emanate and into it they return. This is evidently the cardinal principle of fire-worship as inculcated by the Zoroastrians. The light of Ahur-Mazd, says the hymn, is *hidden* under all that shines. Hêrakleitos also taught that the soul possesses the power to cognise the real truth, while the senses can only perceive that which is variable and particular. The living on earth is a dying from the life of the eternal world, and death is a returning thither. Two other Ionians, Xenophanês and Parmenidês, inculcated the identity of "real being" with thought and knowledge. The perceiving of truth is by intellection; the knowledge obtained by the senses is only apparent. They also taught the existence of two principles, Light and Darkness, the former of which was the essential fire, positive, real, and intellectual; the other cold, negative, and a limitation of the other. After all these great thinkers had fulfilled their mission, Plato rose and placed the cope-stone on their work. He gathered up all that had been taught by those before him, both Ionian and Oriental, including the under meanings of the Mysteries, and presented it in a new form and rendering. The Dialectic of Plato has been the text-book of scholars in the Western World, as the Dialogues of Zoroaster with Ahura-Mazda constituted the sacred literature of the Wise Men of the Far East.

A melancholy interest hangs about the later history of the Mazdean religion. The fine gold became dim. The centuries of Parthian rule enabled the Magians to realise the dream of Gomata and make themselves the exponents of the Zoroastrian doctrine; and when the restoration took place, the change had been made permanent. For centuries their influence penetrated far into the Christian world. The armies of Mohammed, however, arrested its triumphal progress, and overthrew it in its own native seats. Persecution and massacres have reduced the numbers of the adherents to a few thousands, living in Kirman and Bombay. Yet the leaven of truth which it carries has sufficed to preserve it from utter extinction, and it bids fair to continue for centuries.

This grand religious system has been little known and studied. Its magnitude and influence has been underrated. Yet ages have proved unequal to the effort for its overthrow. It has survived the torch of Alexander and the cimiter of the Moslem. Millions upon millions have been put to death for their adhesion to the "pure religion;" yet wherever it survives it is manifest as the wisdom justified by her children. The moral virtues, truth, chastity, industry and universal beneficence, which are found inculcated in the earliest fragments of the *Avesta*, and which were characteristic of the Persians of the age of Cyrus, are even now the peculiarities of this remarkable people. "No nation deserves better," says

Miss Cobbe, "that we should regard their religion with respect, and examine its sacred literature with interest, than the 120,000 Parsis of India—the remnant of the once imperial race of Cyrus and Darius."

Enough, that the ethics and philosophy of Mazdean religion have been wholesome in their influence and a potent leaven to promote the fermentation of thought. Even to our own day we know and feel it. "So much is there in this old creed of Persia in harmony with our popular belief to-day," Miss Cobbe remarks, "that we inevitably learn to regard it with a sort of hereditary interest, as a step in the pedigree of thought much more direct in our mental ancestry than the actual faith of our Odin-worshipping ancestors according to the flesh."

This conviction is founded on a firm ground-work. Zoroastrianism has mingled with the deepest thoughts of the centuries, purifying wherever it was present. The current from that fountain has flowed for thousands of years, fertilising as it went. Everywhere, in whatever form it has appeared, it had always the same idea foremost, the overcoming of evil with good, the triumph of right over wrong.

ZOROASTRISM: AN AFTERWORD.

In order to describe a religion accurately, one ought to have believed in it; and if the meaning of a writer is to be ascertained we should, in our thought, place ourselves in his condition and surroundings. The affectation of critical acumen should be laid entirely aside. We dissipate our powers of discerning aright, when we dwell too much upon verbal technology or external considerations. These requirements are imperative, if we would peruse intelligently the teachings of the great Apostle of Mazdaism.

When I read and contemplate the oracular utterances of Spitaman Zarathustra, I am impressed most vividly with their sweetness and purity, and by the familiarity full of reverence which he always exhibits in his intimate communings with the Divine Being. When the mind is thoroughly pervaded with this sensibility, it can be no impossible matter, nor by any means unwarrantable to eliminate from the *Discourses* whatever is foreign or heterogeneous. Historic and hermeneutic criticism will sanction this proceeding. It should be borne in mind, that it was a practice in former centuries for scribes and teachers to incorporate their own glosses, notions and explanations into the text of great writers; and that few books that were extant before the invention of the art of printing have escaped such tampering.

The Zoroastrian religion is a very exalted monotheism. It was such in its inception; it continued such all through the times when evil and persecution overshadowed its fortunes; it is such now as professed by the Ghebers and Parsis. A fire so perpetual, a light so extensive, an energy so penetrating, can proceed but from the one fountain. True, they are like utterances in the *Rig-Veda*, and the fragments that remain of the lore of the Akkadians, Assyrians and Egyptians. But these remain rather as historic monuments, while Zoroastrism is still a faith that inspires a people to virtue and goodness.

The plurality of good and bad spiritual powers which tainted the vulgar worship with polytheism and idolatry was a pure concept with those who first described them. "The different gods are members of one soul," says Yaska, B.C. 400. "God, though he is one, has yet many names," says Aristotle; "because he is called according to the states into which he always enters anew." To the popular apprehension, the *nomina* became NUMINA. Yet, perhaps this sentiment of multiplicity could not

well be avoided. No one term in human speech can express the All of the Divinity. We ourselves behold the One or the Many as we contemplate Godhood from the interior or the external vision.

The seven Amshaspands of Zoroastrian literature were but the one Ahur' Mazda or Living Essence manifested in seven qualities, as Intelligence, Goodness, Truth, Power, Will, Health and Immortality. The *Rig-Veda* declares that "the wise in their hymns, represent under many forms, the spirit who is but one." So, as Mr. Robert Brown ingeniously remarks: "The Ameshaspentas equally resolve themselves, so far as actual objective existence is concerned, into thin air."

The innumerable spiritual essences, the Yazatas and Frohars, that are treated of in the *Avesta* need embarrass no one. It is hardly rational, when we observe the endless forms and grades of living things in the realm of objective nature, that we should imagine a total blank of all life about the spiritual being. Our plummet may not find a bottom to the Infinite, enabling us to dredge up living substances on the floor of that ocean; yet we are not authorised, therefore, to affirm that there is no God, or to deny that there are intelligent spiritual beings. Our own souls are of this nature, and we are conscious that they, therefore, rule our life and destiny through the power of the Father. We have to look but a step further in order to perceive the Foreworld, of which we, and all the bodied and unbodied souls are denizens alike. By our good disposition and activity we bring the good about us, while evil thought and action evolve the evil.

The "Dualism" of the Parsi philosophy denotes simply and purely the two aspects of the Divine operation—the interior and external, the spiritual and natural, subjective being and objective existence, organisation and dissolution. So far as relates to their respective functions, both are right as well as necessary; but the latter, when it is exalted and esteemed above the former, like Science above Philosophy, thereby becomes perverted and morally evil. It is thus a liar *ab initio* and father of lies.

The essential difference between the nations of the Erânians and their Aryan brethren was social and ethical. The true Mazdean regarded it as his duty to till the soil and live in orderly society. The Parsi *Creed*, of which that of Islam is a plagiarism, thus describes it:

> "The religion of goodness, truth and justice,
> Bestowed upon his creatures by the Lord
> Is the pure faith which Zarathustra taught."

In the *Ahuna-Vairyo* (the will or law of God) the entire belief and philosophy of the Parsis is given. The latest version of this formula, which I have seen may be given in smoother expression as follows:

> "As is the will of the Eternal One
> So through the Harmony of perfect thought
> His Energy brings forth the visible world,
> And his power sustains the rolling spheres."

Darius Hystaspês appears from the proclamation at Behistan, to have first established Mazdaism as the religion of the Persian dominions. He came to the throne by the overthrow of the Magians, and he confirmed his power by the instituting of the Erânian worship. The decree recites the matter:

"Says Darius the King:

'I have made elsewhere a Book in the Aryan language that formerly did not exist.

And I have made the text of the Divine law (*Avesta*), and a *Commentary* of the Divine Law, and the Prayer, and the Translation.

And it was written, and I sealed it.

And then the Ancient Book was restored by me in all nations. and the nations followed it.'"

Perhaps from this fact the several notions originated that the first Zoroaster was contemporary with Darius, and that Darius himself had been instructed by the Brachmanes (or earlier Hindu sages) and had combined their teachings with Magism. At any rate, it seems to me that to find any sentiment or illustration in the *Avesta*, that was originally Jewish or Semitic at all, would require the eye of a vulture, the lantern of Diogénes or the ken of an archangel. Nor does human progress appear anywhere in "a straight line of continuous advance." Life is rounded, history is in cycles, and civilisations come and go like the seasons. At the heel of them all is savagery; but everywhere about them is the life eternal.

A. W.

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THE DOCTRINE OF THE RESURRECTION

A Lecture to the Adelphi Lodge, T .S.

Before turning to the direct consideration of the subject of this paper, it will be useful to touch upon some more general questions with relation to the Christian religion.

Theosophy brings to us a conception of religion widely at variance with those commonly held, either by the supporter of any special creed, or by the sceptic. The claim of the orthodox Christian is that a personal God gave a revelation of his nature and of mysteries, not otherwise to be known by man, through prophets and finally through his own Son who incarnated in the form of a man. The claims of the followers of other religions are of much the same order, each having a special Divine revelation, taught generally by an incarnation or incarnations of the Deity. The sceptic laughs at the whole as the result of the primitive beliefs of savage tribes, with their marvellous explanations of the phenomena of nature, calling in Deities and Spirits of all descriptions to explain natural things, otherwise to them incomprehensible. The belief in the immortality of the soul probably originated, according to this view, in the uncivilised man's interpretation of dreams of dead friends as the real return of the friends, and for most of the religious beliefs of the world are similar explanations forthcoming. They are all traced to the small origin of the uncultivated man's interpretation of the common facts of nature elaborated by the more advanced races and so built into the complex beliefs now covering the world.

There are all degrees of opinion ranging between these two extremes, and one much in fashion is to look upon all religions with a good-natured equanimity, as more or less ingenious poetical expressions of the hopes and dreams of humanity. All have some germ of truth in their simple foundations, but the supernatural and marvellous in their composition are mere excrescences covering the true body. They are thus reduced mainly to different methods of rendering the same broad ethical teachings, and the said ethics are considered to be the only valuable portion. They are various roundabout ways of telling naughty children to be good. They all have their interest, it is said, for the student of human progress, but for the modern man, with his science and his instruments for exploring nature, they can hardly have the same importance as they had for the more innocent and confiding being of olden days. They are all good, very good, and have much value as expressions of that beautiful faculty of imagination which attributes life to natural processes, and stimulates those feelings of devoutness and wonder, which everyone must recognise as

admirable—in their own way. Thus does the modern cultivated man look with benignant and excusing eye on the little frolics and fancies of his forefathers. It is a fine sign of the growth of benevolence. Now the conception Theosophy gives is, so far as I understand it, clearly distinct from all these, and one which appears to me to cover the whole ground more fully.

If we look back over the history of religions, we find they almost all had their beginnings in the appearance of a man or of men claiming to possess direct knowledge of things unknown to ordinary men. These beings came claiming a perception of the inner or spiritual workings of man and nature, and bringing some of the knowledge they had gained, that mankind might learn of the realities of spiritual things, of which otherwise they would have remained ignorant. If we look at the characters of the great religious teachers, so far as history will permit us, we find according to the testimony of those in contact with them, that they represented a high ideal of truth and wisdom in their lives, so that man has always recognised their claim to a divine knowledge, and has recognised that reverence is due to them. Scepticism and materialism may prove to reason that the things they told were dreams, and that they spoke falsely and ignorantly, but the heart of humanity will always receive them as messengers of wisdom, who speak with authority and tell of true things.

In the Theosophical conception, man has the power within himself of obtaining knowledge of the hidden or inner workings of his own, and of surrounding nature. The instruments of knowledge we are acquainted with, the five senses, are not the only ones which may be developed, and men have lived who could investigate nature on other planes, with as much certainty as we can do on this. From uncounted ages of such experience recorded by the sages of the world, who have aroused this inner nature, there has grown a body of knowledge from which those spiritually awakened may draw. The records have not been merely those of individuals working independently, but it is said, that those who have reached a certain stage are united into some sort of organic whole, acting with more or less definite aims. From this great body of knowledge acquired by these and other means, it is said that the various great religions of the world have sprung, and thus they have a common source.

Along with this conception, we have the further one of a double side to the creeds and stories of every form of religion, the Christian included. There is a religion that is public and is open to all, for it is of a nature suited to the unthinking, and to those whose spiritual perceptions are not awakened, and also an inner or esoteric religion, the real meaning underlying the forms of which the outer is built. These are not two

contradictory beliefs, but are, so to speak, the body and the soul. The nner meaning is hidden because, for the mass of the people, the outer is more than sufficient, but for the earnest and the devoted, who seek for the truth, the hidden things are revealed in the very tales and creeds accepted in their dead letter sense by the greater portion of believers.

Most men can sense something of the divine when brought to them in an external form. A great figure, such as almost every religion has as its founder, stands out as an ideal in which they may see some glimpses of a nature other than they know, and this is one great source of power in the sacred beliefs of the world. But when the man begins to perceive the spiritual or the divine within, and sees his ideal lying in the deeper recesses of his own being, he moves from the exoteric creed to the esoteric wisdom. And then the sacred stories mean something more than tales of history revealing an external God through some special man or divine incarnation. They mean the revelation of his own inner nature, the mysteries hidden from the outer eye and the perceptions of the outer mind.

The scriptures of every religion show this double side, the outer and the inner, the open and the secret, and the records of Christianity as clearly as any, notwithstanding the boast of the Simple Gospel, free and open to all. Such claims can only be made by those ignorant of their own Scriptures and the history of their Church, or else disregarding the plain statements of their own authoritative writers.

Turning first to the inspired source itself, the New Testament, let us see what we can find to uphold this claim.

Jesus says to his disciples in Matt. xiii. 11-13 : " Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given. For whosoever hath to him shall be given, and he shall have abundance ; but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away, even that which he hath. Therefore speak I to them in parables ; because seeing they see not, and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand."

This is not quite the free and open gospel of the Churches, but it is a true saying. For to him that has the power of understanding the spiritual truths will be given, while he that has it not, cannot retain even the few crumbs of knowledge he may have gathered, for they do not belong to him. Parables are all that he is fitted for.

But the disciples themselves can receive but a little more. Only a slightly deeper layer of the shell is broken for them. The inner substance is yet hidden. Jesus tells them in John xvi. 25. " These things have I spoken unto you in proverbs (parables) ;—the hour cometh, when I shall no more speak unto you in proverbs, but shall tell you plainly of the Father."

It is significant to note that Jesus has previously been speaking of his own nature and works, and of the coming of the Comforter after his death, and his language is of the most mystical kind. If such teaching is only parable or symbol, how much more must the far cruder teachings in the other Gospels be symbolical, and be, in their literal meaning, but the gross body of the spiritual doctrine.

That the apostles, or some of them, also taught this inner doctrine and guarded it from profanation, we find many evidences, especially in Paul's writings. He says in 1 Cor. ii. 6-7: "Howbeit we speak wisdom among the perfect (or full grown); yet a wisdom not of this world, nor of the rulers of this world, which are coming to nought; but we speak God's wisdom in a mystery, even the wisdom that hath been hidden." And in Chap. iii. 1-3: "And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, as unto babes in Christ. I fed you with milk, not with meat; for ye were not yet able to bear it; nay, not even now are ye able; for ye are yet carnal; for whereas there is among you jealousy and strife, are ye not carnal, and walk after the manner of men?" If this is to be taken as a test of the power to receive the greater teaching, the Holy Church can scarcely be looked upon as an authority on the subject.

But it is in the writings of the early Christian Fathers that we find the clearest statements on this point. Perhaps the most unmistakable utterance is to be found in Origen, in a celebrated work written in defence of Christianity against an Epicurean philosopher, Celsus. Celsus brings the startling accusation against Christianity that it is a secret system, showing clearly that such must have been a not uncommon conception in his time, and one that must have had some justification. The reply of Origen is still more startling. *Contra Celsum*, Book 1, Chapter 7, . . . "to speak of the Christian doctrine as a secret system is altogether absurd. But that there should be certain doctrines not made known to the multitude, which are (revealed) after the exoteric ones have been taught, is not a peculiarity of Christianity alone, but also of philosophic systems, in which certain truths are exoteric and others esoteric. Some of the hearers of Pythagoras were content with his *ipse dixit*, while others were taught in secret those doctrines which were not deemed fit to be communicated to profane and insufficiently prepared ears. Moreover, all the mysteries that are celebrated everywhere throughout Greece and barbarous countries, although held in secret, have no discredit thrown upon them, so that it is in vain that he endeavours to calumniate the secret doctrines of Christianity, seeing he does not correctly understand its nature."

Truly a charming defence against the calumny of secrecy, and one well worthy of consideration by the Church and its fold.

To consider further the method of interpretation of the various stories

and teachings found in the published writings, we have the Theosophical conception that each tale and incident in the Sacred Scriptures of the world has a meaning or meanings not on the surface, but to be sought out with the light of intuition and of any knowledge the student may have obtained.

The true inner meaning of all the great religions is the same. They all teach each other's doctrines in their own special forms, and what is real in them is not the form which makes them Christian, or Buddhistic, or Brahmanical, but the universal truths of which they are all peculiar expressions.

The esoteric meaning is the same in every one, and the true student of the great beliefs which have guided humanity should seek diligently for that truth behind the many monstrous shapes which hide it.

Almost all religions have the same tales and traditions told in varied language. The birth of the Divine Saviour from a Virgin Mother and the Holy Spirit, was a story hoary with age when the Christ-child Jesus was born, and is found repeated time after time in the sacred traditions of many nations. And so with the other Bible narratives. The Annunciation, the worship of the Magi or the Shepherds, the temptation by the Evil One, the Crucifixion and the Resurrection. All are things as old as is Humanity itself, and are echoes of the Primeval Tradition, which is the fountain head of the sacred stories of the world.

And they are not merely stories or traditions of the past. Not alone the fancies and the wild imaginations of our ancient fathers, told to pass away a pleasant hour. They are revelations which are not of time, but belong to the Inner Man, "that was, that is, and will be, for whom the hour shall never strike."

They tell of the mysteries of the Man within the man. They put before us in symbols, often beautiful in themselves, the great things contained in us, and picture in vivid lights the spiritual progress of this inner man. They belong not only to the past, but to our life in the present and in the future, and to that for which there is no past, no present, and no future, but which remains the True and the Permanent.

That the Christian traditions were familiar long before the Christian era we have perfect proof, even to the details, and this was well known to the early Christian writers. Their explanations of this fact are delightful. Justin Martyr, the earliest of the authentic Christian Fathers, writing in the early part of the second century, speaks thus, "It having reached the Devil's ears that the prophets had foretold the coming of Christ, he set the heathen poets to bring forward a great many who should be called the sons of Jove. The Devil laying his scheme in this to get men to imagine that the true history of Christ was of the same character as the prodigious fables related of the sons of Jove."

The dark and learned Sovereign of the lower regions might be well taken by the reverend Fathers of the Church, as an excellent example of a thorough workman, understanding his business.

As examples of the interpretation we are justified in making, according to the Christian teachings, we can turn to a few passages from the New Testament. In Matt. xiii. 37-39, Jesus expounds the parable of the sower to his disciples, "He that soweth the seed is the Son of Man, and the field is the world; and the good seed, these are the children of the kingdom; the tares are the sons of the Evil One; and the enemy that sowed them is the Devil; and the harvest is the end of the world, and the reapers are the angels."

This of course is an interpretation of a story confessedly allegorical, but for instances of symbolical interpretations of Bible tales we may turn to Paul. In Gal. iv. 22-26, he expounds one from the Old Testament, "For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, one by the handmaiden, and one by the freewoman. Howbeit the son by the handmaid is born after the flesh; but the son by the freewoman is born through promise. Which things contain an allegory; for these women are two covenants, one from Mount Sinai, bearing children unto bondage, which is Hagar. Now, this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to the Jerusalem that now is; for she is in bondage with her children. But the Jerusalem that is above is free, which is our mother."

Again, in 1 Cor. x. 1-4, St. Paul expounds allegorically the passage of the Jews through the wilderness, "I would not, brethren, have you ignorant, how that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and were all baptised unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; and did all eat the same spiritual meat; and did all drink the same spiritual drink; for they drank of a spiritual rock that followed them; and the rock was Christ."

That this method of interpretation was in vogue in the early days of the Church, is shown by several of the early Fathers. Justin Martyr in his Dialogue with Trypho says that Christ was symbolised in the Old Testament by the Tree of Life and the rods of Moses, Jacob and others. The stretched hands of Moses in the battle in which Jesus (Joshua) led the fight symbolised the cross. The blessings of Jacob in which he speaks of the horns of the Unicorn, also, Justin tells us, show the cross. And he repeats the interpretation of the serpent held up to cure the bitten people given in the New Testament, in which the serpent is taken to symbolize Christ. But it is in Origen that we find this most strongly affirmed. In his work, *The Apostolic Teaching*, is found the following: "The Scriptures were written by the Spirit of God, and have a meaning, not such only as is apparent at first sight, but also another, which escapes

notice of most. For these words which are written are the forms of certain mysteries, and the images of divine things. Respecting which there is one opinion throughout the whole Church, that the whole law is spiritual, but that the spiritual meaning which the law conveys is not known to all, but to those only on whom the grace of the whole spirit is bestowed in the word of Wisdom and Knowledge."

In *De Principiis*, Book iv. Chapter 1, he deals more specifically with the Christian Scriptures.

"It was not only, however, with the (Scriptures composed) before the Advent (of Christ) that the Spirit thus dealt, but as being the same Spirit, and (proceeding) from one God, He did the same thing both with the Evangelists and with the Apostles, as even these do not contain throughout a pure history of events, which are interwoven, indeed, according to the letter, but *which did not actually occur*." He mentions examples in the Old and New Testaments of what he considers absurdities if accepted literally, among them being the tale of Eden, and the temptation of Christ by the Devil.

So in considering the Christian Scriptures we are at liberty, according to their own teaching, and that of their most authoritative expounders, to interpret them in a symbolical manner. And when we do so, we will, I think, discover many things that throw light on the mysteries hidden in all religions.

Turning to the doctrine of the Resurrection, as presented in the Christian Scriptures and in later writings, we find it divides itself into two distinct aspects, the Physical, or the resurrection of the body, and the Spiritual, dealing with the inner man.

The former or Physical conception, is the distinctly Jewish one, and has been brought into the Christian faith through its connection with Judaism. The Jews themselves obtained it only after the Captivity, so we may presume it to be a remnant from some of the Eastern teachings, in which we find it in different forms. Possibly some form of this idea was the cause of mummifying the body in Egypt, the soul remaining in connection with the same body and returning to it.

It is difficult to find this doctrine in any unmistakable manner in the New Testament. It seems nowhere to be clearly brought forward, and any passages in which such a conception is indicated can with reason be taken as symbolical. For instance, in Thessalonians, St. Paul says, ch. iv. 16, 17, "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven, with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we that are alive, that are left, shall together with them be caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord." If St. Paul meant this

literally, he was a bad prophet, for there is no record of any such event in profane history. The mere statement also that the dead shall rise is not at all precise.

The authority from the Christian Scriptures for such a doctrine seems to rest almost completely on the analogy drawn between the resurrection of Christ and that of man, but even the verses relating to this are of a distinctly mystical description.

For instance, we find Paul in the Epistle to the Romans speaking thus in ch. vi. 5, 6, and 7, "For if we have become united with him by the likeness (or united with the likeness) of his death, we shall be also by (or with) the likeness of his resurrection; knowing this, that our old man was crucified with him, that the body of sin might be done away, that so we should no longer be in bondage to sin: for he that hath died is justified from sin." If we are to take the resurrection literally we must also take the death literally, and so we should have to be crucified in order to be resurrected.

Now if we attempt to trace the origin of the doctrine of the resurrection of the body among the Jews, we come to a very interesting fact. We are told by Josephus that the Pharisees believed in the doctrine of metempsychosis. The relation between such a conception and that of physical resurrection must be obvious to any student, and the writer of the article on Eschatology in the *Encyclopædia Britannica* considers it probable that the idea of bodily resurrection had its origin in the old belief in reincarnation or the passage of the soul from body to body.

So we are able to trace, with some degree of probability, and indeed, if we take a wider view and include a consideration of the Eastern sources of many Jewish beliefs, with almost certainty, the source of this doctrine to that most ancient one of Metempsychosis.

If this is so we should be able to find in the earlier writings some traces of the connection, and we can easily find them in the analogies and similes employed to illustrate the doctrine.

In the 1st Epistle of Clement to the Corinthians, one of the earliest of writings not included in the Sacred Scriptures, and attributed to the latter end of the first century, the resurrection is considered to be proved by the things of this world, the night changing into day, the seed rising up in grain, and so on. But a much more striking simile is given in the Phœnix. This, Clement says, is an emblem of the resurrection, and he proceeds to describe minutely the fable as a symbol of the doctrine. The Phœnix lives 500 years and then dies, and a certain bird being nourished by the flesh, brings forth feathers. Then, when it has acquired strength, it carries the dead bones of its parent to the city of Heliopolis, to the altar of the Sun, places them there and afterwards returns to its abode, and the Phœnix

is reborn. Clement is careful to add that this occurs every 500 years.

Theophilus in his letter to Autolycus, Book i, Chapter 13, also says that the resurrection is proved by natural examples, such as the resurrection of the seeds, the dying of seasons, and the resurrection of the moon every month.

The conception at the root of this belief is that the soul apart from the body cannot be judged for deeds done in the body. As the actions were the result of both body and soul working together, punishment could only be justly meted out to the combined body and soul, and one without the other would be incomplete. This, again, is the Theosophical conception of reincarnation, for Karma brings man back to the same plane to reap the fruits of his former action on that plane.

So we find that behind the crude exoteric belief in the raising of the same physical body for future judgment, stands the ancient doctrine of reincarnation which has suffered many changes and deformities in the course of ages. If we take, in place of the physical atoms, the real body which is its model and the inner principles of the personal man as the body spoken of, we shall find that the belief is not so far from the truth. For on the return of the Ego from its rest in Devachan, it takes up again the substance of the body it had left, and gathers around itself the forces generated on the psychic plane in its past birth.

All this, however, relates only to one aspect of the doctrine, and that the lower. There is another far more profound, and dealing with the greater mysteries. This is the Spiritual doctrine, the Christian as distinguished from the Jewish. It is the resurrection in Christ.

"I am the resurrection and the life," says Jesus, and this is no rising of the body from the earthly grave. It is the second birth through which alone can man see the "Kingdom of God."

Jesus says to Nicodemus, in the Gospel of St. John, ch. iii. 3-8, "Except a man be born anew (or, from above), he cannot see the Kingdom of God. Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter a second time into his mother's womb, and be born? Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born anew (or from above). The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the voice thereof, but knowest not whence it cometh and whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit." This is to become free in Christ as said in other parts of the Book. No longer under the chain of earthly life bound on the wheel of rebirth, but free to move at will, no man knowing the path, the whence or the whither.

What is this Christ, this central figure around which has gathered so much of good and evil, this pivot of the sacred writings of Western races? We can find many answers if we turn to Christian authorities. The Word or Logos, through whom and by whom the world was built, is the highest conception attached to Christ, and this is a universal spiritual principle, according to the early teachings of the Church Fathers. It was not confined to one man or body of men, but was the guiding Spirit, the creative Word.

As Justin Martyr says in his *Apology*, Christ is the Word which was in every man both before and after his time of coming, and among others of the great Pagan thinkers and writers, he affirms that the Word was in Socrates. It was the source of all knowledge and spiritual power overshadowing all men.

This Logos or spiritual power became man, entering into the flesh, and in the orthodox teaching the Logos itself is the man Jesus, and is a personal entity which could incarnate fully in a single body. Are we justified by the Scriptures themselves to limit it thus? I think not, nor even are we justified in taking it as the universal belief of the Church, for we find in the early writings that a very much more philosophical and spiritual conception was prevalent.

In early Church history we may read of the many struggles of the orthodox Church body against the heretics, whose general tendency was to uphold this wider view, and one after another, the various sects were cut off or frightened into becoming outwardly submerged into the main body, which always endeavoured to uphold a cruder creed. This does not, of course, refer to the Gnostics, who could not properly be called Christians, but to those sects led by men high in station within the Church, bishops frequently, who thought themselves orthodox interpreters of the Scriptures, and based their beliefs upon them. But that the Church could not stamp out such heresies even in itself, with all its machinery, we can easily perceive.

To quote again from Origen, here is an exposition of the nature of Christ worth pondering over, by those who accept the literal interpretation of Biblical teaching. For Origen writes as a defender of what he and others considered to be the true orthodox teaching, found in the Biblical writings, and he opposes the heresies of his time as a recognised champion of the Church. This is his understanding of the great mystery of the incarnation, and of the personal Saviour, as given in the second book of his work against Celsus, Ch. ix. The Jew (a character into whose mouth Celsus put his objections to the Christian religion) argues that Christ could not have been God from his inability to protect himself, and from his trying to hide and escape in a disgraceful manner. Origen proceeds, "To

this we reply, that even we do not suppose the body of Jesus, which was then an object of sight and perception, to have been God. And why do I say his body? Nay, not even his soul, of which it is related, 'My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death,' but as according to the Jewish manner of speaking, 'I am the Lord, the God of all flesh,' and 'before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me,' God is believed to be He who employs the soul and the body of the prophet as an instrument, and as according to the Greeks, he who says, 'I know both the number of the sand and the measures of the sea, and I understand a dumb man, and hear him who does not speak,' is considered to be a god when speaking and making himself heard through the Pythian priestess; so according to our view, it was the Logos God, and the Son of the God of all things who spake in Jesus these words, 'I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life,' and these, 'I am the Door,' and these, 'I am the Living Bread that came down from heaven,' and other expressions similar to these. . . . . That the gospels do not consider him who in Jesus said these words, 'I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life,' to have been of so circumscribed a nature, as to have an existence nowhere out of the soul and body of Jesus, is evident from many considerations, and from a few instances of the following kind which we shall quote."

He quotes John i. 26, Matt. xviii. 20, and xxviii. 20. "We quote these passages, making no distinction between the Son of God and Jesus. For the soul and body of Jesus formed after the co-ordination, one being with the Logos of God. How, if according to Paul's teaching, 'He that is joined unto the Lord is one Spirit,' every one, who understands what being joined to the Lord is, and who has been actually joined to him, is one in spirit with the Lord; how should not that being be one in a far greater and more divine degree, which was once united with the Logos of God."

The Christos is thus in its highest sense the Universal Spirit, the Self of the World with which the Self of man may be united. It has the same meaning in the smaller unit, the individual, as it has in the Cosmos. It is the spiritual light within each man, the divine Ego that overshadows rather than enters the physical man; to which indeed the physical man may aspire and may be finally united, having his whole nature under control. In such a sense it is frequently if not generally used by St. Paul, who expresses the idea very clearly in one or two passages of his Epistles. He says in 2 Cor. xiii. 5. "Know ye not as to your own selves, that Jesus Christ is in you, unless, indeed, ye be reprobate;" and in Gal. iv. 19, "My little children, of whom I am again in travail until Christ be formed in you."

The latter verse is most precise. Christ is to be "formed" in us. It

is not a person external to us, in another bodily shape, that is here indicated, but the inner man that has to be formed or built up within us, if we are to reach to spiritual life.

There is thus a double meaning to all Scripture narrative and doctrine, an external or literal one, in which the events are regarded merely as historical happenings ; beautiful and inspiring they may be, but still, these are events belonging to a special time ; and an inner meaning, in which the events, whether historical or not, and the characters of whom the record is given, are types to represent spiritual things. In the latter interpretation there are many keys which may be applied, some of which are given in the Apocryphal books and the mystical Scriptures of both Jewish and Christian origin. But the one most important is that which relates these tales and teachings to the inner nature of man, and with such a conception we can turn to those universal traditions which have been repeated in the Christian Scriptures and extract a new and living meaning from them.

They come not as new inventions but as the echoes of the great tradition that has been handed down from age to age, having concealed in it many things to instruct man if he can receive them. And each time this root tradition has reappeared with some fresh aspect, so that it brings new light to those unable to receive it in its older form, which had lost its power through age.

The Christ or Christos presented to us in Theosophical literature is the true Ego, the real man which passes from incarnation to incarnation on this earth, acting in one body after another, without being wholly limited to that body. The personality or the earthly man we know and recognise is but a shadow of the true being, the temporary mind, the result of the Ego working in a body of gross matter with a brain unfitted to receive fully the knowledge that has been gathered during the course of ages. This personal or brain mind is the result of the higher, but is its expression through an imperfect instrument.

The personal man comes into direct contact with this greater mind within him only in rare moments when, exalted above his normal state by some effort, he receives a sudden flash of intuition clearing up perhaps many an obscure problem. Such occurrences may be rare with most men, but they show that there exists a state in which the ordinary mental processes are thrown aside and an activity of a higher order takes their place. The records of the famous writers and thinkers of the world show us that such flashes are the source of most of the great thoughts that have influenced humanity. Many show a knowledge not obtained by the man himself in his normal state, but still a knowledge that must have been the result of experience. With the conception of re-incarnation before us, we may find

some clue to many of the problems set us in cases of genius and even in the exceptional experiences of ordinary men. At times this great storehouse of the real experience of life, that is, the great lessons learnt deeply, so as to be built into the very nature of the man, may be opened and some of its contents reached. This is the source of real intuition, which is not the vague guessing so often called by that name, but a perception of truth that is clearer than any that can be afforded by reason, because it is the result of past knowledge gained by real work. The true intuition, while it seems but a flash giving knowledge of things the man has never learnt, may really be the bringing back of some glimpses of knowledge he has himself acquired by the only means known to us, that of experience.

The complete man is the one in whom the Higher Self or Ego has become one with the lower, that is, the man whose brain can register the thoughts and activities of the higher mind, so that he has in his reach the wisdom he has gathered from his great past, and can come into the world with knowledge, instead of ignorantly as now. Such men have been the great saviours of humanity, who enter earth with a consciousness of purpose, not blindly, having to learn each step with care, but recognising their past, and knowing the path they are to tread.

How far are we justified in taking the Christ of the New Testament and applying to it such an impersonal meaning? We should find such an interpretation from the Book itself if it is a true one. I think there is little difficulty in doing this. "There was the true light," says the Gospel of John, in the first chapter, "which lighteth every man coming into the world. He came unto His own, and they that were His own received Him not. But as many as received Him, to them gave He the right to become children of God, even to them that believe on His name; which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." This light, which lighteth every man coming into the world, is surely the heritage of all and not a person who could live on earth as a man. It cannot be confined to one section of humanity, to the Holy Church, however catholic it may profess itself to be, while it refuses to include the great mass of mankind because it cannot or does not worship under the same forms. That Christ is the light of each individual man, potential in all, and which may be aroused or received according to the will of the earthly man. And this light in Theosophy is called the Higher Ego, which every man may awaken within himself. It can take no note of verbal quibblings over the nature of the Trinity, as to whether the three persons are of one substance, or of different substances, or are equal in power or unequal, or of the profound speculations of its shadow, the brain-mind, on the nature and attributes of the God who rules the Universe, while the nature and attributes of an atom are as yet unknown to it. If

it is the true light within each man it must be approached by other means than those, and a blind belief in a dogma or even an historical event will help but little while the mind is not open to the light proceeding from within.

Jesus, in expounding his nature and speaking, as Origen says, in the person of the Logos and not as an individual man, says, according to John xv., "I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit, he taketh it away; and every branch that beareth fruit, he cleanseth it, that it may bear more fruit. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine, so neither can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches. He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same beareth much fruit; for apart from me ye can do nothing. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and they gather them, and cast them into the fire and they are burned."

It is significant that Christ speaks of every one as having his origin in him, whether failure or not. It is the true Ego speaking of the false personality which does not recognise its real nature, and is but a mask of the true man, a temporary character which he assumes. Each Ego, we are told in almost every Eastern teaching, assumes the form of many personalities with qualities according to the circumstances in which they work, and to the records of the past deeds of the Ego, each life forming a bead on the thread, according to one familiar simile, the thread passing on unbroken from life to life. Unless the bead can recognise the thread on which it is formed, it can penetrate neither into the past nor the future, and for it there is no immortality, save as a slight memory of the true Ego. And there is also another possibility for the personal man which is clearly taught in this passage. The personal man may bear no fruit at all, and may be cut off from its higher nature, as the branch is cut from the vine, and may be cast aside as unworthy of a part in the memory of the man, having lost every glimpse of the light which was its source.

In conection with this we have also the utterance of the Apostle Paul already quoted, "Know ye not as to your own selves, that Jesus Christ is in you, unless, indeed, ye be reprobate." The same idea is expressed in other words.

There is a doctrine among orthodox Christians that has perhaps not been so popular as it deserves, for it is, when properly understood, one of the most esoteric of orthodox doctrines. I refer to that of conditional immortality, in which the man obtains eternal life only by receiving Jesus Christ. He is not, according to this teaching, damned to an eternity of torment, but simply ceases to exist when his body dies, or if raised again is raised only to be finally destroyed. Only those who have accepted Christ

are raised again in order that they may live the life eternal. Immortality, whether of happiness or of misery, is not a thing belonging to the nature of man, but a gift from God, or from Christ, which is obtained by believers alone.

This is a belief that recommends itself for its mercy in comparison with the perpetual fire of the more common creeds, but the feeling that a mental belief could scarcely make the difference between immortality and destruction has probably prevented it becoming more widely spread. It has, however, a close connection with this spiritual aspect of the Resurrection, and it will be worth while to consider it with regard to its scriptural authority. Its Theosophical equivalent has already been roughly considered in the relation of the Ego and the personality.

The conception given in the New Testament is that the Divine alone is permanent, all else is transitory. The Divine alone can enter the Kingdom of Heaven. As expressed in the most mystical of language by Jesus in John iii. 13-15, "No man hath ascended into heaven but he that descended out of heaven, even the Son of man, which is in heaven. And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up; that whosoever believeth may in him have eternal life."

Thus to reach this exalted condition it is necessary that the personal consciousness identifies itself with the higher: otherwise there is nothing that is permanent, the thoughts are only flitting changes of the mind and are not rooted in the deeper nature.

In so far as we have awakened within us this higher nature, we are taught both by the Esoteric Philosophy and by the Christian Scriptures, we become immortal, for the only personal memory which can remain is linked with those thoughts that receive their life from above.

The conception is beautifully expressed by St. Paul in his first Epistle to the Corinthians, Chap. iii.:—"Other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. But if any man buildeth on the foundation gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay, stubble; each man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it is revealed in fire; and the fire itself shall prove each man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work shall abide which he built thereon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved; yet so as through fire." The purifying fire that is met in almost all the sacred books of the world is the fire that proceeds from above, the fire of knowledge which burns up the great rubbish heap whereon man has cast his dead thoughts.

If the man does not build on that foundation, he is judged and condemned, and what is the judgment? Eternal torment because of failure and of ignorance? Christ himself can answer—"For God sent not the

Son into the world to judge the world; but that the world should be saved through him. He that believeth on him is not judged; he that believeth not hath been judged already, because he hath not believed on the name of the only begotton Son of God. *And this is the judgment*, that the light is come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the light; for their works were evil. For every one that doeth ill hateth the light, and cometh not to the light, lest his works should be reproved."

Thus the tales and the doctrines of Christianity, as of all other religions, teach us of our own inner nature, and tell under many different symbols of the light within, which may be received or rejected. Its first rays come as the voice of conscience guiding man along the path, and as that is strengthened by the growth of man, it becomes not the mere prompting of his sense of justice depending for its action on the intellect, but a true guide which perceives the truth without veil, an instrument of knowledge which can be used at will. And finally there comes the new birth, which is the true resurrection.

There is another view of the spiritual aspect of the resurrection given in the Bible, and it would not do to leave it out of account, as it is perhaps clearer than the one just considered. This view is given by Paul in the famous passage in 1 Corinthians, chap. xv., on the natural and spiritual bodies. "There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial; but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another. There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for one star differeth from another star in glory. So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption: it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body."

Perhaps in the forty-first verse we get a hint of the nature of the two bodies which may help us in understanding the true meaning. Paul says, "There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon," and if we bear in mind the Eastern conception of the sun as representing the spiritual nature, and the moon the psychic, we shall probably come to the conclusion that Paul is speaking of the spiritual and the psychic or subtle bodies that man is said to possess. The one is the sun, the giver of life to man, the vehicle of his great pilgrimage through the cycle of rebirth, passing from birth to birth, and receiving and recording the great lessons that have been learned by the soul in its pilgrimage. It is the storehouse of all the greater forces which govern us through life, which belong to the nature of the Ego itself. In it are the germs, which are unfolded in earth life, and which force the growth of the personal man, and thus in the

Eastern teaching it is called the Karana or causal body. The other body is born from below. It belongs to the personal man, and is rebuilt at each incarnation. It is corruptible, and may decay, while the other is relatively incorruptible.

It is worth noticing that the resurrection is said to be sown in this natural body, and thus the first germ of the resurrection that is to give life, is the birth in the purified psychic body, or that which proceeds from it and the overshadowing spiritual body. It is the process of which Jesus speaks when he says to Nicodemus, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God." But the complete resurrection is the full entering into that spiritual vehicle which persists from the beginning of the great life cycle to the end.

This Spiritual or causal body is the true Christ body, when all germs of evil are thrown out from it. It remains potential in every man, as the Christ is said to do, unless he be "reprobate," and it can be made active. Into it, according to Theosophical teachings, man passes after his earth life, and just so far as his personal actions and thoughts have aroused this inner mind, will he retain the personal link of consciousness. But this birth into the spiritual nature between the embodiments on earth, is not the resurrection that is taught here. The latter only comes when this inner mind and body are aroused so that the man can act with full self consciousness in an objective life on the spiritual plane, having awakened the spiritual senses so that they may perceive the objects of that plane.

Paul goes on "So also it is written, The first man Adam became a living soul. The last Adam became a life giving spirit. Howbeit that is not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; then that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthy; the second man is of heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthly, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, neither doth corruption inherit incorruption."

The first seeds of the resurrection are sown in the first Adam, the earthly, the corruptible, but the last Adam is he who descends "out of heaven, even the Son of man, which is in heaven," and then is the raising of the dead complete.

This conception is widely different from the orthodox doctrine of the resurrection of every man in his earthly body, or even of the little considered spiritual resurrection which, if it is paid any attention to, is thought to mean the going to heaven of all who believe. All who have faith according to the creed of the Church and die believing their crimes to have been

forgiven because of that faith, are ensured a life of joy everlasting. But that this is the teaching neither of Jesus nor his apostles we can see by a very elementary study of the New Testament. It is no easy going creed we learn of Paul, whereby a man may gain eternal life if he accept a thing as true which he cannot understand. The salvation is to be won by effort, to be worked out by each man, and unless he chooses to awaken the higher life within him, he has refused the light.

It is a stern creed that Paul teaches though a hopeful one, and the first step to be made by an aspirant to the greater knowledge is the stilling of the lower nature, the conquering of the passions and the "flesh." In the Epistle to the Romans it is said in chap. viii.: "Brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh: for if ye live after the flesh, ye must die; but if by the spirit ye make to die the deeds of the body, ye shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God."

There is no Vicarious Atonement here, nor Salvation by Blind Faith, though it is but another form of the teaching to be found in the Gospels, for the Faith that is spoken of there is the calling down of the power of the Spirit to conquer the earthly man. If the "making to die of the deeds of the body" is necessary to salvation, how many of the believers, even of the devout, are able to reach this "life" that is promised them. Surely we must see that it is no light thing on which a man may count, if he behaves himself moderately well and piously accepts his Church's creed. It is thought by Paul to be a thing needing a great struggle, which few may win, a narrow path in which only the highest of the earth can walk.

That something of this sort was recognised in the early Church, we have the authority of Origen, who tells us that only the purified were allowed even to be told the true doctrines of Christianity, which were never made public to the ordinary believers. He says in the 3rd book of his work against Celsus in chap. lx.: "Whoever is pure not only from all defilement, but from what are regarded as lesser transgressions, let him be boldly initiated in the mysteries of Jesus, which properly are made known only to the whole and the pure. . . . He who acts as initiator, according to the precepts of Jesus, will say to those who have been purified in heart, 'He whose soul has for a long time been conscious of no evil, and especially since he yielded himself to the healing of the word, let such an one hear the doctrines which were spoken in private by Jesus to his genuine disciples."

Origen draws a clear line between the two sides of the Christian propaganda, that of the "Sinner, repent," and that of the teaching of true doctrines, and the initiation into spiritual life. He admits both as the purpose

of Christianity, and says in chapter lxii.: "God the Word was sent, indeed, as a physician to sinners, but as a teacher of divine mysteries to those who are already pure, and who sin no more." No blind faith this, but the true creed of every religion, that he alone who has conquered the earthly man can reach the heavenly.

But far beyond all such initiations into the secret Christian mysteries is the resurrection, which can be attained only by the perfected man, and even the greatest of the Apostles cannot claim to have reached it. For Paul says in his Epistle to the Philippians, chap. iii. "Yea, verily, and I count all things to be loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord . . . that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, becoming conformed unto his death; if by any means I may attain unto the resurrection from the dead. Not that I have already obtained, or am already made perfect; but I press on, if so be that I may apprehend that for which also I was apprehended by Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself yet to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting the things which are behind, and stretching forward to the things which are before, I press on toward the goal unto the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Let us, therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded."

There are two kinds of perfection here mentioned, for Paul speaks as one that is perfect in the latter part of the quotation, and as not yet made perfect in the former portion. He was one of the perfect, in the sense used by Origen as a person sufficiently governor of his lower nature to be admitted into the mysteries, but the other perfection is the glorified man, the union with the Heavenly Man descending from above.

There are many meanings to be sought for in the doctrine of the Resurrection of Man. Some two or three of the most obvious and elementary have been indicated, and these can be obtained from a mere cursory comparison of the Canonical and other more or less orthodox writings. Even in relation to the individual man this doctrine may be found to refer to a higher stage than that mentioned here, the birth into the spiritual body, but speculations on that further stage, spoken of as the Day of Judgment, and described in Oriental magnificence of imagery in the Book of the Revelation, would mean little more than verbal jugglings.

In conclusion, I repeat there is one thing to be remembered, and that is, that this resurrection, this re-birth through which we must pass before entering the "Kingdom of Heaven," is no slight thing to be obtained by all men who believe, as they term it, in Salvation by Christ. For the belief that is to give life is, as Paul says, the crucifying of the old man with Christ, dying as he died, and rising as he rose, and all belief that is less than that can never lead the believer to his goal. And it is the few that can thus

attain, the chosen only of the earth, for us this thing can stand but as an ideal, as yet far before, though still attainable in the ages to come. It is the great Path that has stretched before man since he became man, but has hardly yet been worn into a highway by the passing feet. Every great teacher that the world has had has trodden this same path, and has pointed out its direction to those who cannot see it: and thus has made it a real thing to many who would otherwise have remained in darkness.

For this Path is not the path of the good man, of the moral man, of virtue alone, but of Wisdom, which is beyond all those things, including them as the greater does the less. It is the path of the Conqueror, proceeding towards a recognised goal, having the light within him which shines upon the road, directing him. It is in this recognition of a greater life, of a sacred land within the heart that true religions differs from Ethics and Moral Philosophies. They may show us the Good, even the noble, but beyond these is that subtle nature that mankind, while unable to understand, has recognised in its heart when it sees it shining through some great soul it worships as a hero or a god. And such a man is called good and pure, but there are other names given that cannot be truly applied to he merely good and pure, and these are holy, sacred, divine. And till the possibility of such conceptions has utterly vanished, men will not rest with ethics and morality as guides, but from the artificial regulations of all such systems, will turn in their higher moments to the spring of pure life within their hearts to find there an unfailing guide.

And to the Conqueror is promised the great Resurrection, the triumph of his victory, the life which is complete. Hear the words of promise of that one "like unto a son of man," who held the seven stars in his right hand, speaking to his Churches, "To him that overcometh, to him will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the Paradise of God. Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee the crown of life. He that overcometh shall be arrayed in white garments; and I will in no wise blot his name out of the book of life, and I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels. He that overcometh I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go out thence no more." Thus, and in many other ways, have the great sacred books of the world spoken, with awe, of the great mystery, the Man become God.

A. M. Glass.

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The Cambridge Platonists.

A LECTURE.

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THE CAMBRIDGE PLATONISTS.

A LECTURE.

The attempt to reconcile the doctrines of the Christian religion with the philosophy of Plato and of the Stoics dates from the earliest centuries of our era. It is a distinctive feature of the Fourth Gospel, the opening paragraph of which is pure Platonism, and to be rightly understood only by those who have some acquaintance with the teachings of the Platonic school. It was continued by the most profound thinkers among the Christian Fathers: by Origen, and Clement, and Augustine. To the mediæval church the Platonic tradition was handed down in the writings which passed under the name of Dionysius the Areopagite. It coloured the theology of the Angelic Doctor, Thomas Aquinas; and blossomed afresh in the teachings of Master Eckhart, and the German Mystics of the fourteenth century. It received a new and powerful impulse during the Italian Renaissance, from the labours of Marsilio Ficino and Pico della Mirandola. Even at this day Platonic Christianity is not wholly extinct, nor, perhaps, is it destined to extinction so long as Christianity itself endures; but its last prominent appearance in the history of literature was in the seventeenth century, in the writings of a group of English scholars and theologians, collectively known as the Cambridge Platonists.

Every religion which the world has known may be regarded under two aspects. There is the esoteric, or inward, religion, which is in essence everywhere one and the same; and there is the exoteric, or outward, religion, the garb wherewith the inward truth is clothed, and too often disguised, which varies with the differing manners of men, and the changeful course of the ages. Behind both Platonism and Christianity abides the one Truth, which each is striving to express, which each expresses in more or less imperfect fashion. Each springs from the same source, each tends towards the same goal; their difference lies in the mode, and perhaps also in the degree, of expression. But among the Platonists there has always been one insuperable point of dissension between Christians and non-Christians: the Christians identified the Logos or Word of God with the personality of Jesus of Nazareth; the non-Christians refused to restrict the corporeal manifestation of the Logos to any human personality whatsoever. To both Christians and non-Christians the Logos originally meant the same thing: it was the second principle of the Platonic Triad, the second person of the Christian Trinity: the mind or consciousness of the Deity.

It will not, I think, be irrelevant to our subject if we attempt here to investigate, though very briefly, the nature of this Triad or Trinity, in accordance with the teachings of Plato and Plotinus. The first hypostasis, or principle, of the Triad is denominated by them the One, and the Good. It is that Unity from whence all things proceed, in which all things have their being, and towards which all things ultimately tend. From this One, which is beyond attributes and beyond essence, emanates the second principle, Nous—that is, Intellect or Consciousness—which is called also Logos, or the Word. In this principle all being is comprised, all life, and all power; and it has three aspects, Being, Life, and Intellect. In its third aspect it is the Creator, in its second aspect the creative energy, in its first aspect the essence of all that is. And again, in its first aspect this principle is the Intelligible World of Plato, the World of Ideas—of the realities, namely, whereof all things in this visible universe are but the shadows, or imperfect expressions. To this Intelligible World, the home of eternal Being, the Creator is said to look, fashioning the sensible world therefrom as from a pattern or paradigm. And similarly, a Christian Platonist would speak of "the Father thinking Himself," meaning the same thing with Plato; since Being, Life, and Intellect are not three distinct substances, but three aspects of one and the same principle—the Nous or Logos.

From Nous emanates the third principle of the Triad—Psyche, the Soul. And as Nous is the Logos, or expressed thought, of the One, so also may Psyche be called the Logos of Nous. Soul, then, is the medium through which the Intellect creates. Its essence is eternally established in the Father, Intellect; and from thence it extends itself downward through the changeful realms of Time and Space, expressing in mutation the Immutable, receding from the Father and again returning thither. The whole phenomenal universe is the soul's attempt to realise by the senses, under conditions of time and space, the eternal facts of the World of Ideas.

I am well aware how impossible it is to convey to you, in so few words, any clear conception of what the Platonic philosophers understood by this Triad of hypostases. But I think you will perceive that their Triad and the Christian Trinity, although in some respects analogous, are by no means identical; and you may easily imagine how a non-Christian Platonist would have recoiled with horror from the impiety, as it would seem to him, of identifying the all-comprehending Logos with the personality of one mortal man. To the Christian Platonist this identification became possible. Man was admittedly the microcosm of the macrocosm: in the wide universe nothing existed which was without its correspondence in the soul of man. Might not then the perfect Man be regarded as a

manifestation of the Logos in all the plenitude of its power? On the other hand, the true successors of Plato held that the Logos was perpetually manifesting itself in the entire world of phenomena. Man is indeed the microcosm of the macrocosm, but, in the words of Proclus, "all such things subsist in him *partially*, as the world contains divinely and totally." Or, if we may use again the oft-employed and beautiful metaphor, the Logos is as the Sun, of which every soul is a ray—inseparable from its source, and one in essence with it; yet distinct. A non-Christian philosopher would find the same incongruity in restricting the power of the Logos to one human personality, as in restricting the power of the sun to one of its innumerable rays.

Thus you see that the point of divergence was not the recognition of the Logos in Jesus, but its restriction to the person of Jesus. It is possible, indeed, that some of the early philosophic Christians accepted this identification in a sense not utterly irreconcileable with Platonic conceptions of the Logos; holding that the divine essence, everywhere present and the same, was but more fully manifested in Jesus of Nazareth than in any other person. Moreover, the pseudo-Dionysius, whose writings were held in such high esteem by the mediæval Church, boldly affirms "That Christ before his resurrection was simply a mortal man, even inferior, as it were, to the angels, and that only after the resurrection did he become at once immortal man and God of all."* But such views as these are not, and perhaps never were, regarded as orthodox. In distinguishing between the divinity in Jesus, and the divinity which is manifest throughout the universe, the Christian writers forfeited their claim to be reckoned among the genuine disciples of Plato.

Nevertheless, the light is the same, although it is variously refracted, and there are different degrees of illumination. And in all ages this has been recognised by Christian thinkers, who have felt the strong attraction of Plato's philosophy, and have owned him, despite their differences, as a master of wisdom and a fellow-servant of the Truth. In our own country, the most remarkable instance of Christian Platonism is to be found in the writings of those seventeenth century scholars who are known as the Cambridge Platonists. These men were both students of philosophy and divines of the Church of England, and their true mission was to prove a fact so constantly in practice, and so often, even in theory, denied—the essential unity of religion and philosophy. "For my part," says one of them, Dr. Henry More, "I look upon the Christian religion, rightly understood, to be the deepest and the choicest piece of philosophy that is." And indeed, I think it may be said that true religion and true philosophy are not only inseparable, but that in their essence they are really the same. It is

* Max Müller's *Theosophy or Psychological Religion*, p. 468.

certain, at least, that without philosophy religion is very apt to become superstition, and that without religion philosophy will inevitably degenerate into materialism.

This outburst of Christian Platonism in England was not confined to Cambridge: two of its prominent supporters, John Norris and Joseph Glanvill, were educated at Oxford. Cambridge University, however, was its headquarters; and I purpose this evening to offer you some remarks upon the writings of two Cambridge scholars, the leaders of the movement: Dr. Ralph Cudworth, who is, I suppose, the best known of the group, and Dr. Henry More, who deserves to be the best known. On the principle of reserving the best to the last, I shall begin with Dr. Cudworth.

Ralph Cudworth was born in Somersetshire in the year 1617. In May, 1632, he was admitted to Emmanuel College, Cambridge: he took his degree in 1635, and in 1639 became Master of Arts and Fellow of his college. Six years later he was chosen Regius Professor of Hebrew to the University of Cambridge, which position he held during the remainder of his life. In 1654 he was appointed Master of Christ's College—the college at which Milton had studied, and of which Cudworth's friend and brother-Platonist, Henry More, was at this time the most distinguished ornament; and (to finish at once with these dates) in June, 1688, he died, and his body was interred in the chapel of Christ's College.

Cudworth's first published work, a *Discourse Concerning the Lord's Supper*, appeared in the year 1642; but the great work of his life, the work on which his reputation almost entirely rests, was not published until 1678, when he was above sixty years of age. This work is entitled *The True Intellectual System of the Universe, wherein all the Reason and Philosophy of Atheism is Confuted, and its Impossibility Demonstrated.* It is a book replete with learning, and—a circumstance in the highest degree creditable to Cudworth—the arguments in behalf of the various atheistic systems are stated with such fulness and candour, as to have given rise to the suspicion, in prejudiced or superficial minds, that the author was himself little better than an atheist in disguise. To this circumstance Dryden alludes, in the dedication of his version of the *Æneid*, observing that Dr. Cudworth "has raised such strong objections against the being of a God, and Providence, that many think he has not answered them." The suspicion, nevertheless, was wholly unwarranted: if the atheistic arguments are fairly stated, they are as fairly controverted; and it is impossible for anyone, who has read the book carefully through, honestly to believe the author guilty of insincerity or lukewarmness in the cause of religion.

Extensively and intimately acquainted with the writings of the ancient philosophers, admiring and frequently upholding the teachings o

Plato, Cudworth was nevertheless by no means so profound a Platonist as his friend, Henry More. Thus we find in him a strong advocate of the atomic theory, maintaining, and indeed with perfect reason, that this theory is not of necessity atheistic: the atomists before Democritus, says he, were asserters of a Deity and substance incorporeal. If body consists, as Plato and Plotinus held, of matter which is incorporeal, and form which is likewise incorporeal, then body, too, must be incorporeal! "But," continues Cudworth, "the ancient Atomic philosophy, settling a distinct notion of body, that it is διάστατον ἀντίτυπον (extended resistance), a thing impenetrably extended—which hath nothing belonging to it but magnitude, figure, site, rest, and motion, without any self-moving power—takes away all confusion; shews clearly how far body can go, where incorporeal substance begins; as also, that there must of necessity be such a thing in the world."

Yet Cudworth's intended reduction to an absurdity of the Platonic theory of matter and body, is altogether superficial. He maintains that as souls unquestionably derive their whole being from the Deity, so matter or body (for he does not sufficiently distinguish between these terms) "was created likewise out of nothing, or caused by the Deity." He postulates two distinct substances, one incorporeal, the other corporeal, both generated in time, and from nothing; or rather, for this is what it really amounts to, from the substance of the Creator. Now according to the Platonists, there is but one real substance, and that is intelligible essence. Matter has no objective existence, and body represents, in fact, a mode of the soul's perception. But let us accept for a moment the hypothesis that body is true material substance, actually, and not merely apparently, existent. How then can this corporeal substance be created out of nothing, or rather, out of the substance of the Creator? Since the substance of the Creator is certainly incorporeal and intellectual. How then, upon this hypothesis, can one substance proceed, wholly and immediately, from another substance totally distinct from it in essence? And Cudworth himself employs a similar argument in order to prove the impossibility of the production of soul from matter.

The Platonic theory, however, which Cudworth rejects, is briefly this: The Creator is an intellectual and eternal being, who creates therefore essentially, and not deliberatively. That is to say, he creates by his very nature or essence, as fire by its nature produces heat; and not by a process of deliberation, since deliberation implies time, and cannot therefore be attributed to that which is eternal. Thus the creation, being an expression of the very nature of the Creator, partakes of that nature, and is said to be of the same kind secondarily as its cause is primarily. The universe, then, so far as it participates of intellectual order and per-

petuity, is the work of the Demiurgic Intellect, but so far as it is sensible and mutable it is produced through soul as a medium. And body represents the attempt of the soul to realise to itself the eternal Ideas by means of sense; but as sense is incapable of apprehending essences, but apprehends only appearances, so the objects of perception to sense are not real beings, but the shadows or transitory images of beings.

A very large portion of Cudworth's book is occupied with his attempt to show that the ancient Pagans in reality believed in one Supreme Being; that their seeming polytheism was but the polyonymy (as he calls it) of the one God; that their real polytheism was the worship of generated, not of self-existent, Gods. This argument he illustrates with great learning and countless instances, and his contention is doubtless to some extent justified. Like all Christian Platonists, he makes much of the analogy between the Platonic Triad and the Christian Trinity, although he allows that the resemblance is not complete, inasmuch as the Platonic theory "supposes the three hypostases not to have one and the same singular essence, nor yet an absolute co-equality, but a gradual subordination and essential dependence." He rebukes Plotinus for his assertion that our soul is of the same species with the mundane or universal soul; which doctrine Cudworth terms, "a monstrous degradation of that third hypostasis of their Trinity," "a thing liable to be much abused to creature-worship and idolatry, when the distances are made so wide, and the lowest of the Deity is supposed to differ but gradually from the highest of created beings." This disagreement as to the nature of the third person of the Trinity is in fact an inevitable consequence of the disagreement which we have already noted between Christian and non-Christian Platonists with respect to the second person, the Logos. There is no more essential feature in Platonic theology than the belief that all things, from Absolute Being down to matter (which in a certain sense is non-being), are conjoined in an unbroken chain of causes and effects. To cut off the Creator from the Creation, as Cudworth and many others think proper to do, would be, in the mind of a true Platonist, to render creation itself impossible, to destroy that unity which is the sustaining power of the universe, to establish chaos in the place of order.

There is one thing more in Cudworth's book upon which I should like to say a few words; his very ingenious attempt to reconcile the Christian dogma of the resurrection of the body with the teaching of Platonists on this matter. According, then, to the Platonists, the soul possesses three vehicles, or bodies. Of these, the first is called the æthereal vehicle, or body of light; it is the first vehicle assumed by the soul proceeding from its parent, Intellect, and becoming established in the world of time and space. This vehicle, however, being pure light (as most nearly allied to

the light of Intellect), is hardly to be termed a material body; but the second vehicle properly marks the descent of the soul into material conditions, and is denominated the aerial or spiritual body (τὸ πνευματικὸν σῶμα); and it is formed of the elements, and very pure, but yet in the course of long time corruptible. The third vehicle, which betokens the lowest descent of the soul into matter, is this gross, terrestrial body which we now inhabit. Possessing, then, these three vehicles, the soul, upon the death of this body, retires into its aerial body, and so abides until the period of its re-incarnation has arrived. But when, by purification, it has passed beyond the necessity of re-birth, it discards its aerial body likewise, and employs the æthereal vehicle alone, returning, as Plato says, to its kindred star: that is, to the æthereal vehicle of the star to which it is related—in our case, the earth. And there is a higher state even yet, as Plato and Plotinus and Proclus all assert; for the soul which has attained the summit of philosophy, shall be freed utterly from body, and shall pass into eternity and that Intelligible World from whence it first descended.

Cudworth, then, maintains that the resurrection body is no other than this æthereal, or luciform, vehicle of the soul; but he holds also that the gross body which is laid in the earth, does itself at the resurrection become converted, by some wondrous alchemy, into this æthereal body. This view is, of course, entirely opposed to that of the Platonists, who held that the earthly body, the controlling life being removed, was resolved again into its kindred elements. Moreover, Cudworth denies the possibility of the soul's perfection apart from body—a theory which he regards with some scorn, as a conceit of such high-flown and unsafe philosophers as Plotinus. Life in conjunction with an æthereal body he deems the summit of its attainment. The Platonic doctrines of pre-existence and re-incarnation are dismissed by him as "offensive absurdities."

But enough of Cudworth: let us turn now to a far more interesting man; a truer Platonist, and a profounder philosopher. For Dr. Henry More was a poet and a visionary; not in the vulgar acceptation of the term "visionary," as of one who lives in the fantastic and the unreal; but as one who had true glimpses of the inward light, visions of that selfless ecstasy of which Plotinus speaks—the summit of right philosophy. I shall presently endeavour to give you some account of More's great poem, his "Platonic Song of the Soul"; but before we enter upon the poem, I think it will be well to consider a little the life and character of its author, that we may understand what manner of man this was, who in England, in the seventeenth century, amid the tumult of warring sects, when all men around him were fighting, as it were, about shadows, lived a life of peace and retirement, thinking deep thoughts, and conversing with God as a friend. He was born at Grantham, in October, 1614; and seems to have

been happy in his parents, although they were earnest Calvinists. The letter in which he dedicates his "Song of the Soul," "to his dear Father, Alexander More, Esq.," is filled with expressions of love and respect: "I could wish myself," he writes, "a stranger to your blood, that I might with the better decorum set out the nobleness of your spirit. But to speak modestly; you deserve the patronage of better poems than these, though you may lay a more proper claim to these than to any: you having from my childhood tuned mine ears to Spenser's rhymes, entertaining us on winter nights with that incomparable piece of his, 'The Fairy Queen,' a poem as richly fraught with divine morality as fancy."

In 1631 More entered as a student at Christ's College, Cambridge. At this time, he tells us, "A mighty and almost immoderate thirst after knowledge possessed me throughout; especially for that which was natural; and above all others, that which was said to dive into the deepest cause of things, and Aristotle calls the first and highest Philosophy, or Wisdom. . . Thus then persuaded, and esteeming it what was highly fit, I immerse myself over head and ears in the study of philosophy, promising a most wonderful happiness to myself in it. Aristotle, therefore, Cardan, Julius Scaliger, and other philosophers of the greatest note, I very diligently peruse. In which, the truth is, though I met here and there with some things wittily and acutely, and sometimes also solidly spoken, yet the most seemed to me either so false or uncertain, or else so obvious and trivial, that I looked upon myself as having plainly lost my time in the reading of such authors."

Four years spent in such studies ended in something approaching to scepticism. More had begun at the wrong end: he had yet to learn that the science of universals can alone unfold the true nature of particulars. After taking his degree, he entered upon a more hopeful course of study, reading now "the Platonic writers, Marsilius Ficinus, Plotinus himself, Mercurius Trismegistus, and the mystical divines; among whom there was frequent mention made of the purification of the soul, and of the purgative course that is previous to the illuminative; as if the person that expected to have his mind illuminated of God was to endeavour after the highest purity." One book he mentions which then beyond all others pierced and affected him; "that golden little book" (he calls it), entitled *Theologia Germanica*, a treatise which has been ascribed, though doubtfully, to the famous German Theosophist, Master Eckhart. Herein he found it mightily inculcated "That we should thoroughly put off and extinguish our own proper will: that being thus dead to ourselves, we may live alone unto God, and do all things whatsoever by His instinct or plenary permission;" which doctrine, says he, "was so connatural, as it were, and agreeable to my most intimate reason and conscience, that I could not of anything

whatsoever be more clearly or certainly convinced." "But after that the sense and consciousness of this great and plainly divine duty was thus awakened in me; good God! what strugglings and conflicts followed presently between this divine principle and the animal nature! For since I was most firmly persuaded, not only concerning the existence of God, but also of His absolute both goodness and power, and of His most real will that we should be perfect, even as our Father which is in Heaven is perfect; there was no room left for any tergiversation; but a necessity of immediately entering the lists, and of using all possible endeavours that our own will, by which we relish ourselves and what belongs to us, in things of the soul as of the body, might be opposed, destroyed, annihilated; that so the Divine Will alone, with the New Birth, may revive and grow up in us. And," he adds, "if I may here freely speak my mind, before this conflict between the Divine Will and our proper will or self-love, there can no certain signs appear to us of this New Birth at all."

He had set his feet upon the path; and mark what followed. "All my other studies, in comparison of *this*, became vile and of no account: and that insatiable desire and thirst of mine after the knowledge of things was wholly almost extinguished in me; as being solicitous now about nothing so much as a more full union with this divine and celestial principle, the inward flowing well-spring of life eternal: with the most fervent prayers breathing often unto God, that he would be pleased thoroughly to set me free from the dark chains, and this so sordid captivity of my own will. But here openly to declare the thing as it was: When this inordinate desire after the knowledge of things was thus allayed in me, and I aspired after nothing but this sole purity and simplicity of mind, there shone in upon me daily a greater assurance than ever I could have expected, *even of those things which before I had the greatest desire to know:* insomuch that within a few years I was got into a most joyous and lucid state of mind; and such plainly as is ineffable."

Men live to themselves, apostatizing from the divine harmony in which the universe is established; and on this account, says Proclus, "there is much among them of *mine* and *not mine:* but they abandon the union and communion of life." Henry More had explored the knowledge of things, and his learning had been futile: he had now discovered that truer life which is not in separateness, but in union, a life as of the Gods, having all things in common; not losing the individuality, but blending it, as the musician in an orchestra blends his own part, in the harmony of the whole. And lo! now that he could see them in their right relations, all those things that he had longed for, not yet understanding, were added unto him. The soul which knows itself, says Proclus again, sees in all things, yea, in the smallest, symbols of the Gods.

Here is one more quotation from our Cambridge Platonist: "I say that a free, divine, universalized spirit is worth *all*. How lovely, how magnificent a state is the soul of man in, when the life of God, inactuating her, shoots her along with Himself through Heaven and Earth; makes her unite with, and after a sort feel herself animate the whole world. This is to become deiform, to be thus suspended (not by imagination, but by union of life; Κέντρον κέντρῳ συνάψαντα, joining centres with God), and by a sensible touch to be held up from the clotty dark personality of this compacted body. Here is Love, here is Freedom, here is Justice and Equity, in the super-essential Cause of them. He that is here looks upon all things as One; and on himself, if he can then mind himself, as a part of the Whole." Well might he call himself *Incola Cœli in Terrâ*, an Inhabitant of Heaven upon Earth!

The serene beauty of Henry More's mind is reflected in his literary productions, both in prose and verse. He was perhaps not less intimate with the works of the ancient philosophers than his friend Dr. Cudworth, but with a truer sense of their inward meaning. Cudworth, indeed, although a man of deep thought and learning, seems almost superficial by the side of this visionary poet. He was more mixed up with the outer world, preaching on one occasion before the House of Commons. But Henry More was always the secluded scholar, content with his fellowship of Christ's College, with his books and his studies. It was no selfish seclusion which he sought; his chamber-door, it is said, was as a hospital to the needy. But such honours as the world could bestow, the preferments which from time to time were offered him, he constantly rejected. A little story is told of him which I will repeat to you, as it is very characteristic of the man. He was a royalist by conviction, and, after the Restoration, his friends prevailed upon him to undertake the journey to London, in order to pay his respects to the King. On the way he was informed that his visit would be the prelude to a bishopric, which the King would certainly bestow upon him; whereupon he instantly returned to Cambridge.

There is one thing which seems to me to illustrate very clearly the difference between More and Cudworth. Of all the great philosophers of the Platonic school, Plotinus is at once the most mystical and the most profound; of him it has been said that he worked out the mystical element in the teachings of his master, Plato, to the utmost limit of vision and ecstasy.* Now Cudworth quotes Plotinus, but, I venture to think, without rightly appreciating him; on some occasions, as we have seen, he dissents rather strongly from the position of Plotinus, and this on very important

* Walter Pater: *The Renaissance*, 2nd ed., p. 40.

points. With Henry More, on the other hand, Plotinus was a first favourite: he is never tired of quoting and praising him. "O more than man!" he exclaims in one of his poems:—

> "But Thou, O more than man!
> Aread, thou sacred Soul of Plotin dear,
> Tell what we mortals are, tell what of old we were."

I am afraid Henry More's poems are somewhat deficient in the qualities which make for popularity. They are offered to those who "are at leisure a while to lay aside the pleasure or trouble of the world, and entertain their minds with thoughts of a greater compass than the fetching in of a little wealth or honour." Such, indeed, will find them well worthy of perusal; perhaps others will hardly be induced to read them. His great poem, the "Platonic Song of the Soul," first published in 1642, is divided into four parts, to which were afterwards added two considerable poems, on different aspects of the same subject, by way of appendices. It is written in the Spenserian stanza—you have not forgotten those winter evenings with the "Faërie Queene"—and with a plentiful use of Spenserian archaisms, rather agreeable than otherwise, but still such as would assuredly have subjected any other poet of More's time to a charge of affectation; though More himself lived so wholly apart from the world, with his books and his thoughts, that I suspect he was hardly conscious of the archaisms as he penned them.

The first part of the poem is entitled "Psychozoia," or the "Life of the Soul:" it is an allegory in three cantos, whereof the first is concerned with the Triad or Trinity, under the names of "Ahad," "Æon," and "Psyche." "Ahad" is that which Platonists call the "One"; "Æon" (Eternity) is the Nous or Logos; Psyche, whom our poet names also Uranore (celestial), is, of course, the soul. The canto opens thus bravely:—

> "Nor Ladies' loves, nor Knights' brave martial deeds,
> Ywrapt in rolls of hid antiquity;
> But th' inward fountain, and the unseen seeds,
> From whence are these and whatso under eye
> Doth fall, or is record in memory,
> Psyche, I'll sing. Psyche! from thee they sprung,
> O life of Time and all alterity!
> The life of lives instil his nectar strong,
> My soul t'inebriate, while I sing Psyche's song."

In this canto the poet records the mystic marriage of Æon and Psyche, and describes the fourfold vesture of the soul. Her outermost garment is this visible universe; the next in order is that which we call Nature; the third is the garb of Sense; while the fourth, or inmost covering of the soul, is Semele, the Imagination—"Prophets and Poets have their life from

hence." Like Plato and Plotinus, Henry More is by no means heedless of the beauty of this outer world, of the sweetness of this "gladsome life of sense;" yet like them also, he earnestly recognises its transitory and unreal nature. For beauty subsists in the idea alone, and that which we term the beautiful in material objects is in truth a certain reminiscence of the idea which these shadows awaken in us. Yet it is sweet to live, and sweet to see the sun :—

> "But O! what joy it is to see the Sun
> Of Æon's kingdoms, and th' eternal Day
> That never night o'ertakes!"

In another stanza he develops the thoroughly Platonic notion that love of the beautiful in externals may assist the soul to rise to the perception of the inward and true beauty—

> "And this I wot is the Soul's excellence,
> That from the hint of every painted glance
> Of shadows sensible, she doth from hence
> Her radiant life and lovely hue advance
> To higher pitch, and by good governance
> May weaned be from love of fading light
> In outward forms, having true cognisance
> That those vain shows are not the beauty bright
> That takes men so, but what they cause in human spright."

There are many noble passages in this first canto of "Psychozoia," which I must deny myself the pleasure of quoting, that I may tell you somewhat of the pilgrimage of Mnemon (the mindful), which is the principal subject of the second and third cantos. Psychany, or the region of the soul, is divided into two mighty kingdoms; whereof one is called Autæsthesia, the land of self-sense (or self-sensedness, to use More's own word); the other Theoprepia, the land of the likeness of God. And Authæsthesia is again divided into two provinces: Beirah, which signifies the brutish, or animal life; and Dizoia, the double life, a condition "betwixt man and beast, light and darkness, God and the devil." From Beirah, therefore, the pilgrim's path lies through Dizoia, until, the love of self being wholly lost or transmuted into the love of God, his journey ends in "blest Theoprepy." But first of Beirah Mnemon has much to tell, and of its inhabitants, those in whom the spiritual sense is as yet unawakened. For even in Beirah there is much talk of religion, and loud contention and intolerance; though of true inward religion nothing is found there. All this the poet recounts with much picturesque circumstance and keen-edged satire. To Henry More, Faith has but one foundation—the Spirit of God in the soul, the divine light which is known of itself alone. Of authority other than this he is impatient; yet his satire is without uncharitableness:

all false seeming, all imperious pretensions arising from love of self, excite his scorn, but not the errors, whatsoever they be, of any honest seeker after truth. "I would be very loath," he writes, in the preface to the second edition of his poem, "to be so far mistaken as to be thought a censurer or contemner of other men's religions or opinions, if they serve God in them in the simplicity and sincerity of their hearts, and have some more precious *substratum* within, than inveterate custom or natural complexion. All that I mean is this: that neither eager promoting of opinion or ceremony, nor the earnest opposing of the same; no, not the acuteness of reason, nor yet a strong, if naked, conceit that we have the Spirit of God, can excuse a man from being in any better condition than in the Land of Brutes, or in the mere animal nature."

On the border of Beirah, where the country verges upon Dizoia, the pilgrim's way is obstructed by the wall of Self-conceit. This he passes by the door of Humility, and enters into the land of double life, the state of conflict between the higher and lower nature in man. Mnemon's first impression of the unrestful land is finely depicted.

"When we that stately wall had undercrept,
We straightway found ourselves in Dizoie:
The melting clouds chill drizzling tears then wept;
The misty air sweat for deep agony,
Sweat a cold sweat, and loose frigidity
Fill'd all with a white smoke; pale Cynthia
Did foul her silver limbs with filthy dye,
Whiles wading on she measured out her way,
And cut the muddy heavens defil'd with whitish clay.

"No light to guide but the Moon's pallid ray,
And that even lost in misty troubled air:
No tract to take, there was no beaten way;
No cheering strength, but that which might appear
From Dian's face; her face then shin'd not clear,
And when it shineth clearest, little might
She yieldeth, yet the goddess is severe.
Hence wrathful dogs do bark at her dead light:
Christ help the man thus clos'd and prison'd in dread Night."

By the dim light of the Moon, the poet here signifies the first troubled awakening to a sense of the divine law. This is the country of the Apterites, the Wingless Folk, who are yet "fain to flag among the dirty desires of the world, though sometimes full of sorrow and vexation for their gross vices." You will doubtless remember what Plato says in the *Phædrus* concerning the wings of the soul. Here Mnemon passes through the Valley of Weeping, and is deceived awhile by the false dawn which lightens upon Ida Hill. For thereon stands the castle of Pantheothen (All

of God), as it is named of those that built it; though indeed it were better named Pandæmoniothen, All of the Devil. For they that dwell therein are Ireful Ignorance, and Unseemly Zeal, and Self-conceit, and Rash Censure, and Spiritual Pride, and all such evils as beset the soul that is awakening to the spiritual life. And the Keeper of the Castle is Unfelt Hypocrisy, that most dangerous kind, namely, which does not know itself to be hypocrisy.

With the morning Mnemon comes to the land of Pteroessa, whose inhabitants have wings "whereby they raise themselves above the mire and dirt of the corrupt body." And these wings are called Faith and the Love of God. There, upon a hill of steep ascent, he beholds three sisters, clad in robes of snowy whiteness. And here it seems to him that the end of his pilgrimage is attained, for by these sisters are represented the ancient philosophies of Pythagoras, and Plato, and the Stoics. But the end is not yet. I will quote a sentence or two from the poet's own comments on this remarkable episode, wherein, however, I am inclined to believe that his Christianity has for once led him to be a little less than just to those great teachers of whom he was so worthy a disciple. "A noble spirit," he writes, "moves in those philosophers' veins, and so near Christianism, if a man will look on them favourably, that one would think they are baptized already, not only with water, but the Holy Ghost. But I, not seeing humility and self-denial and acknowledgment of their own unworthiness of such things as they aimed at, nor mortification, not of the body (for that's sufficiently insisted upon), but of the more spiritual arrogative life of the soul, that subtile ascribing that to ourselves that is God's, for all is God's: I say, I not seeing those things so frequently and of purpose inculcated in their writings, thought I might fitly make their philosophy, or rather the life that it doth point at (for that's the subject of this poem) a type of that life which is very near to perfection, but as yet imperfect, having still a smack of arrogation and self-seeking."

Upon this I will only observe that the merging of the self in God is the great end of Platonic philosophy, and that our author's phrase "acknowledgment of their own unworthiness of such things as they aimed at," points to a state by no means so near to perfection as he imagined it. For the acknowledgment must be either sincere or insincere. If it be sincere, that is, an acknowledgment of real unworthiness, then we answer that no amount of imputed virtue will enable the soul to attain those things at which it aims, before it is indeed worthy to receive them. But if the unworthiness be feigned, and the acknowledgment insincere, the false humility which dictates it is in itself a kind of unworthiness.

Beyond the hill of the three sisters lies the Valley of Ain, or Self nothingness. Into this dark valley the pilgrim descends, and, having passed

through it, he arrives at the sun-bright kingdom of Theoprepia. And with this Mnemon ends his discourse. Of Theoprepia he will not trust himself to speak :

> "Too hard it is, said he, that kingdom's glee
> To show ; who list to know himself must come and see."

We have no time this evening to examine the remaining parts of this great "Song of the Soul." I should like, however, to say yet a word or two upon one of the poems which it includes—a singularly profound and beautiful piece upon the Pre-existency of the Soul ; a doctrine, be it said, which to Henry More was by no means the "offensive absurdity" that it seemed to Cudworth. In this poem he tells of the soul's descent into matter, and of its vehicles—the æthereal, aerial, and terrestrial bodies of which I spoke a while ago. There is much here, also, of apparitions, "of ghosts, of goblins, and dread sorcery," of souls which leave the body in trance, and other such matters, with which the poet deals as with well ascertained facts. It is easy to charge him with ignorance and credulity ; not easy to establish the justice of such a charge, or to evince that More's attitude on these questions is indeed inconsistent with either reason or experience. That part of the poem which treats of the descent of souls is largely derived from Plotinus, to whom the poet here addresses that brief, but glowing, apostrophe which I have already quoted. He calls upon Plotinus to "tell what we mortals are, tell what of old we were ;" and the answer comes almost in a paraphrase of the very words of the master :—

> "A spark or ray of the Divinity,
> Clouded in earthy fogs, yclad in clay,
> A precious drop sunk from Eternity,
> Spilt on the ground, or rather slunk away :
> For then we fell when we 'gan first t' assay,
> By stealth, of our own selves something to been,
> Uncentering ourselves from our great stay,
> Which fondly we new liberty did ween,
> And from that prank right jolly wights ourselves did deem."

One more quotation by way of farewell. With these lines the "Song of the Soul" concludes :—

> "What now remains, but since we are so sure
> Of endless life, that to true piety
> We bend our minds, and make our conscience pure,
> Lest living Night in bitter darkness us immure."

Wm. C. Ward.

THE ENTHUSIASM OF NEOPHYTES.

(Reprinted from "The Theosophist," June, 1890.)

THE oft-quoted line, "Men * rush in where angels fear to tread," is

* Our gentle contributor misquotes this word. Pope used a *much* stronger one.—*Ed.*

brought very forcibly before us when we are learning with difficulty one of the first needful lessons in our study of occultism. In our newly-awakened consciousness of spiritual life, we feel the zeal and enthusiasm which comes with fresh powers—the first breath of the Divine belief which will grow to the whirlwind of faith that removes mountains. We are helped and strengthened, and long to assist everyone with whom we come in contact in the same way in which we seem to have been helped. We are eager, impatient to bring our fellow-travellers into smoother paths, feeling sure we can do it, that words and thoughts, if only poured into their groping minds, will bring the light they need; we are angry when we are told that our efforts are as fruitless and impossible as bringing to perfection in one short moment the latent powers and beauty in a seed; so we go on like children, digging up our gardens to hasten our seedlings into the sunshine—until like children we too learn that nature will not be hurried; and with the enlarged knowledge comes patience and endurance. It is most difficult to realize all the slow steps of individual progress. We cannot even analyze our own development—nor watch our own growth—how little then can we judge of another, and what mischief may we not do by trying to hasten the process—what tender green leaves may not be killed by blighting frost or drying wind if brought too soon out of the friendly nursing warmth of the earth. It seems darkness to us, but how necessary to growth! The plant is not ready for full sunshine, nor for open rain, nor drenching dew. No efforts of ours can force the natural development without serious risk. A bud forced open does not make a full-blown rose. How then can half-grown budding souls be forced and pushed? We may tend, shelter, and help within certain limits, but every one of us has to grow *alone*. We have, to use another simile, to walk every step of the way; we cannot be carried. In this lies the secret of true development and progress. It will naturally be asked: Is all zeal wrong, all fervour and enthusiasm to be crushed—are we to sit down resignedly and give up that greatest of all pleasures, helping others? Are we only to be perpetually striving over self-culture, tending everlastingly our own plot of ground, as if we ourselves were alone in the vast universe and cut off from all contact with others? For it seems to us that this is carrying to its utmost limits the worst faults of asceticism; it would nullify all the teachings of Theosophy and be the exact opposite of our aims and aspirations.

But let us patiently accept at the beginning of our occult studies the need for self-cultivation and self-development; meanwhile resolutely resisting all temptations to teach or help others till we ourselves shall at all events have weeded out some of the useless growths in our own minds; till we have made room for spiritual light and air, and have begun to recognise and distinguish between what is good and fruitful, and what is the reverse.

A mind devoting its energies to learning cannot, at the same time, be anxious and striving to teach. We do help our own knowledge at times by trying to teach, but we cannot be at once in a receptive and in an effluent state. We must first make thoroughly our own any truth we want another to recognise; otherwise our half-digested truth hinders and not helps that other's power of assimilation.

Imperfect knowledge, unconscious of its partial ignorance, is always accompanied by a certain dogmatic attitude, and a pride in the new truth, as one of its own finding; but when the knowledge grows clearer, dogmatism is impossible, for the ideal truth recedes ever further from our grasp, its growing clearness showing ever its infinity as compared to our finite minds.

First, then, we have to learn and to keep silent, and when we have checked and schooled our enthusiastic impulse to shout our newly-found truths from every housetop—then, and then only, are those of our fellowmen put in our way whom we can really help. When we are fit to teach any one out of our small store, he who will best benefit by the little we can do will be there ready to receive it.

As we have received, so will others receive from us. It is but a little that can be done *outside* each individual mind; but so surely as that mind needs and seeks, so surely will it find. We are but the conduit-pipes, the instruments, for conveying spiritual help to others: indeed our power of helping is in exact inverse ratio to our self-consciousness and pride—the more we think we are effecting the less we really do; but provided our aim be pure, and the key-note of our life be set in perfect accord with the Divine harmony, then the more we allow ourselves to be passive instruments, the more we shall be used as channels through which spiritual life may flow.

The seeker after truth who plunges into the sea of modern Theosophical literature may well be buffeted by contrary winds and torn by conflicting currents if he allows himself to drift passively therein. For the pure water of truth is diluted with error, covered with the froth and foam of fanatical "faddists," and full of the driftwood of old prejudices, beliefs, and opinions. He must be a strong swimmer who would breast it all, and he needs a faithful soul and a single eye if he would keep from drowning.

It may be a good thing that a seeker should have so much difficulty, so many faults and will-o'-the-wisped to bewilder him, for a jewel that is hard to find is always most valued; but for the weak ones and those easily led into tortuous paths, there is great danger in letting young untried minds attempt the *rôle* of leader; that their zeal is great and their courage high, only increase the risk. The more serious side to it is one that these enthusiastic beginners scarcely if ever see until too late; for it cannot be too often insisted on that the first step into occult studies, whilst bringing fresh light also has its corresponding depth of darkness.

Temptations hitherto unknown arise to retard progress—new trials are brought before the aspirant as tests, and the dangers that had so often been pointed to in fiction, such as elementals and demons and the dreaded "Dweller on the Threshold," are very real and very terrible.

The study of occultism should never be heedlessly undertaken by any one. It is not and can never be a wonderland that may merely be peeped into by childish curiosity, hungry for marvels; he who once ventures within the portals cannot go back; here there can be no after-closing of the eyes. But there are two ways in which to go forward—the straight undeviating progress upwards and onwards, the earnest effort to regenerate the whole life; or the other path, the reverse side of the picture, which is only too easily trodden by wavering souls. And as the one reaches spiritual heights undreamed of in our most fervid imaginings, so does the other descend into depths we cannot fathom. And the Karma of this must come upon the leader of the untried soul—upon the teacher it falls, and he has to bear the burden of consequence if he teaches falsely, or in any way rashly opens the door into knowledge that may not be given to all.

Christian Theosophists have most plainly before them the example of their own great Master, who taught in parables lest those who were not ready for the truth should come to harm. Even to His own chosen few He said, "I have many things to say to you, but ye cannot bear them now"—recognizing clearly the gradual growth and development, both of the race and of the individual. Many a mind has been quite unhinged, many a spiritual eye blinded by a too sudden pouring in of light—this veil of matter is not woven around us without purpose—we cannot with impunity draw it away, though it may be now thin, and the spiritual powers may grow gradually stronger and stronger till the time comes for its removal.

Let not the Neophyte therefore be disheartened; his zeal and fervour are Divine gifts to be cultivated and cherished, but expended in a right direction, not recklessly as forces used with heedless youthful impulse, but in a steady, calm, ever-strengthening stream, united with others in the same single-minded effort to raise and help the whole human family to its destined perfect end. There is a quaint old proverb, pregnant with truth, "If everyone swept before his own doorstep, the street would be clean"—and translated somewhat and completed for the student in Theosophy we might render it—"First self-knowledge and self-cultivation, then self-abnegation and a life lived for others."

Our work for others will be of ten-fold value if we have first learned, in ever so small a way, how to know and work for ourselves.

FRANCIS ANNESLEY.

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EXTRACTS FROM THE TREATISE OF SYNESIUS ON PROVIDENCE.

Translated by THOMAS TAYLOR.

THIS fable is Egyptian. The Egyptians transcend in wisdom. Perhaps therefore this also being a fable, obscurely signifies something more than a fable, because it is Egyptian. If, however, it is not a fable, but a sacred discourse, it will deserve in a still greater degree to be told, and committed to writing.

Osiris and Typhos were indeed brothers, and procreated from the same seed. There is not, however, one and the same relationship of souls and bodies. For it is not congruous to souls to be born on the earth from the same parents, but to flow from one fountain. But the nature of the world imparts two fountains; the one indeed being luminous, but the other obscure and dark. And the one scatters its streams from the earth, as having its roots beneath, and leaps from terrene caverns, in order that it may offer violence to the divine law. But the other is suspended from the back of heaven.* And it is sent from thence, indeed, for the purpose of adorning the terrene allotment. In descending, however, it is ordered to be careful, lest in adorning and arranging that which is disorderly and unadorned, it should itself become, by approximating to it, filled with turpitude and deformity. But the law of Themis proclaims to souls, that whatever soul, in associating with the last of things, preserves its own nature free from contamination, shall again by the same way [in which it descended] be restored to the fountain from which it was derived;† just as the souls which after a certain manner are impelled from the other fountain, are from a necessity of nature collected into kindred receptacles.

> Where slaughter, rage, and countless ills beside,
> In Ate's meads and darkness, wander wide.‡

This is the nobility and ignobility of souls. And thus it may happen that a Libyan and Parthian may be allied to each other, and that those whom we call brothers may have no relationship of souls; which appeared by certain indications to be the case with these Egyptian children from their birth, and was clearly manifested when they arrived at the perfection of manhood. For the younger of the two, being born and educated through a divine destiny, was from his infancy desirous of learning, and a lover of fables. For a fable is the wisdom of children. He likewise applied himself to learning with an ardour far beyond what might be expected

* *I.e.*, from an intelligible essence. † See my translation of the *Phædrus* of Plato.
‡ These lines are from Empedocles.

from his age. He was also obedient to his father, and imbibed with avidity whatever wisdom any one possessed; at first, indeed, with a canine eagerness as it were, desiring to know all things at once, as is usual with those geniuses who raise great expectations of themselves. For these pant [after glory], and burst forth before their time, already promising themselves the attainment of the end after which they aspire. In the next place, long before the age of puberty, he was more sedate than a well-educated old man, and modestly attended to what was said to him. But when it was requisite that he himself should speak, or when he was interrogated about what he had heard, or about anything else, his delay and his blushes were obvious to everyone. He also made way for, and resigned his seat to the elder among the Egyptians, though he was the son of one who possessed a mighty empire. He likewise reverenced his equals, and was naturally disposed to pay attention to the welfare of mankind. Hence, while he was still a youth, it was difficult to find an Egyptian who had not through his means received some benefit from his father.

The elder brother Typhos however was, in one word, perverse in everything. For the king, indeed, had procured for his son Osiris, teachers of all wisdom, both of such as is Egyptian, and such as is foreign. But this Typhos profoundly hated, and ridiculed as only fit for the idle and the servile. Perceiving also that his brother conducted himself in an orderly and modest manner towards his companions, he considered this to be occasioned by fear; in consequence of which conduct in his brother, no one ever saw Osiris striking another with his fist, or spurning with his heel, or running in a disorderly manner; and this though his body was light and pure, and an easy burden to the soul which it surrounded. But neither did Osiris ever drink greedily, or laugh immoderately, so as to convulse the whole body, as was daily done by Typhos; and he considered those works alone to be the province of free men to accomplish, which were performed voluntarily and opportunely. Hence, Typhos neither resembled his own race in his natural disposition, nor, in short, any man; and in one word, he did nor even himself resemble himself, but he was a certain all-various evil. And now indeed he appeared to be a sluggish and useless burden of the earth, since he only spared as much time from sleep as was sufficient to replenish his belly, and to deposit other things which might serve as the viatica of sleep. But at another time he neglected even a moderate supply of what the necessities of nature required, in order that he might leap inelegantly, and be troublesome both to his equals in age, and to those that were older than himself. For he admired bodily strength as the most perfect good, and employed it badly, either in breaking open doors, or hurling large masses of earth. And if he happened to wound anyone, or do any other evil, he rejoiced as if it were a testimony of virtue. He was

likewise inflated with unseasonable desires. Besides this also, he was envious of his brother, and hated the Egyptians, because the people indeed admired Osiris in their discourses and songs, and all of them everywhere, both at home and in their common sacred ceremonies, supplicated the Gods to bestow upon him every good. Such a character therefore as this was Typhos, and such he appeared to be. Hence, Typhos formed a society of stupid youths, for no other purpose (since he was not naturally adapted to love anyone judiciously) than that certain seditious persons might be with him, who were averse to Osiris. But it was easy for any one to gain the good-will of Typhos, and obtain from him such things as youth require, if they only whispered any thing defamatory against Osiris. Such a difference, therefore, in the lives of the two, was indicated by their natural dispositions from childhood. But as in paths which are in a different direction, the difference which is at first small, becomes gradually greater, till at length they are distant from each other by the most extended interval, thus also it might be seen in these youths, that the difference between them, which was small at first, became very great as they advanced in years. These, however, did not gradually but immediately proceed in contrary paths, the one being allotted perfect virtue, but the other perfect vice. As they increased in years, therefore, the opposition of their deliberate choice also increased, the indications of which became more evident by their deeds.

Osiris, therefore, as soon as he arrived at the age of puberty, associated himself with those who were appointed to the army, as the law did not allow those who were so young as he then was, to bear arms. He ruled likewise over their decisions, being as it were intellect with reference to them, and used the leaders of armies as his hands. Afterwards, his nature increasing like a plant, produced a certain fruit which became continually more perfect. But being made a prefect of the spearmen, an auditor of reports, the governor of a city, and the chief of the king's council, he rendered each of these departments much more venerable than they were when he received them. But Typhos being made the treasurer, (for their father thought fit to make trial of the disposition of the youths in smaller affairs) disgraced both himself and him by whom he was appointed to this office, being convicted of stealing the public money, and of bribery and stupidity in his administration. Being transferred, therefore, to a magistracy of another kind, in the hope that he might be adapted to it, he acted in the latter more disgracefully than in the former; and that part of this most excellent kingdom over which Typhos presided, was for a whole year considered inauspicious. From these he passed to other men, and transferred to them also grief and lamentation. Such, therefore, was Typhos in his government of men. And privately, indeed, he employed himself in

lascivious dances; and associated with the most disorderly Egyptians and foreigners, who were prepared to speak and hear, to suffer and to do all things, so that his banqueting-room was the workshop of all various intemperance. He likewise snored when he was awake, and was delighted to hear others do the same, conceiving the thing to be a certain admirable music; and he both praised and honoured him who could extend this intemperate sound, and give a greater roundness to it. Among these also, he who was especially strenuous and shameless in all his conduct, and who was not averse to anything disgraceful, obtained many rewards for his *fortitude*, and besides these, certain magistracies as the wages of his base licentiousness.

Such, therefore, was the domestic conduct of Typhos. But when he transacted the affairs of the public, then he clearly demonstrated that vice is all-various. For it is discordant both with virtue and itself, and all the parts of it are in opposition to each other. In transacting public business therefore, being inflated with pride, he immediately became furious, and barking more ferociously than an Epirotic dog, inflicted calamity either on an individual, or a family, or a whole city. The greater also the evil was which he occasioned, the more he was delighted, as if he would wipe away with the tears of mankind the infamy of his domestic indolence. Nevertheless, one advantage was derived from this evil. For frequently when he attempted anything of a dire nature against someone, he was induced to fall into suspicions foreign from the truth, so that he resembled those who are furious through inspiration of the Nymphs, strenuously contending about the Delphic shadow. In the meantime, he who was in danger was saved; for no mention was made of him afterwards. Or it so happened that he was seized with a lethargy and a heaviness in his head for a certain time, so as to forget what he intended to do. Afterwards, however, though he recovered from this stupor, yet he lost all recollection of past transactions. He would likewise contend with those who were in administration, about the quantity of grains of wheat contained in a medimnus, or the cyathi contained in a congius; exhibiting in such disputes a certain superfluous and absurd sagacity. Sleep, also, by opportunely attacking Typhos, would sometimes snatch a man from destruction. For Typhos, when seized with this, would have dashed his head on the ground, unless some one of his attendants, laying aside his lamp, had supported him. And thus it frequently happened that a tragical *Pannuchis** ended in a comedy. For he did not transact business during the day, because he was naturally hostile to light and the sun, and adapted to darkness. But though he clearly knew that every one with whom the smallest degree of wisdom was

* Any sacrifice or mystery which was celebrated during the whole of the night, was thus denominated.

present, despised his extreme ignorance, yet he did not accuse himself of folly, but was on this account the common enemy of intelligent men as of those that injured him, because they knew how to form a judgment of things. For he was a man incapable of giving counsel to others, and most ready in the contrivance of stratagems. With him folly and an insane confidence were inseparably united, which are two pests of the soul that corroborate each other; than which there neither are, nor ever will be in the nature of things, evils of a greater magnitude, or more prompt to destroy the human race.

These several particulars the father saw and understood, but at the same time provided for the welfare of the Egyptians. For he was a king, a priest, and a wise man. And the Egyptian writings say that he was also a God. For the Egyptians do not hesitate to believe that myriads of Gods* have reigned over them, before the earth was governed by men, and they trace the descent of their kings from Piromis to Piromis.† When therefore the divine laws had transferred him to the greater Gods, and the day destined [for the election of his successor] was present, the tribes of the priests, and the soldiers that were natives of the land, assembled together from every city of Egypt, having been previously cited by a proclamation for this purpose. These, therefore, assembled from the necessity of law. It was lawful, however, for the rest of the people to be absent; but no one was prevented from being present, who intended to come as a spectator of voting, and not as one who was to give his vote. Swineherds, however, were excluded from the spectacle, and such foreigners as bore arms for the Egyptians: for it was not lawful for these to be present. The elder son, therefore, on this account had much fewer votes than the younger. For the seditious faction of Typhos consisted of swineherds and foreigners, an insane and numerous class of men; yet yielding to custom, and not attempting anything contrary to it, nor considering the

* Every God, according to the arcana of ancient theology, beginning from on high, produces his proper series as far as to the last of things; and this series comprehends many essences different from each other, such as Angelical, Dæmoniacal, Heroical, Nymphical, and the like. The lowest powers also of these orders, have a great communion and physical sympathy with the human race, and contribute to the perfection of all their natural operations, and particularly to their procreations. Such men, therefore, as transcended the herd of mankind either in practical or intellectual virtue, in consequence of being inspired by and also knowing the divinity from whom they descended, called themselves by the name of that divinity, and were in consequence of this denominated Gods. For a copious account of these heroic souls, see the notes to my Pausanias, and to the *Cratylus* of Plato in the last volume of my translation of his works.

† "When Hecatæus," (says Herodotus in Enterp.) "in the account of his family, came to mention the 16th God, they (*i.e.*, the priests of Jupiter at Thebes) would by no means admit of his supposition, that a man could be begotten by a God; but on the contrary told him, that each of the images he saw, represented a Piromois begotten by another Piromois; and that of the whole number, amounting to 345, no one had been reputed either a God or a hero; the word Piromois signifying no more in their language than an honest and virtuous man, which character all those represented by the images had, and yet were far inferior to the Gods."—Littlebury's *Herodotus*, vol. i. p. 221.

disgrace of their exclusion as something dire, but as that which was appropriate, as being established by law, and natural to their race.

A king, however, among the Egyptians was created as follows:—There is a sacred mountain near the great city of Thebes, and another mountain opposite to it, between both of which is the stream of the Nile. Of these, the mountain opposite to that which is sacred, is called Libycus, in which the candidates for the election of the king were by law commanded to dwell, during the time of preparation for the ceremony, in order that they might not know anything of the choice which would be made. But the sacred mountain is called Egyptius. On the summit of this is the tabernacle of the king, with whom also those priests dwell who transcend in wisdom, and the arrangement proceeds to every class of those of superior endowments, distributing the seats according to the dignity of the mysteries [in which those who filled them were initiated]. The first circle, therefore, consists of those, who are placed about the king as if surrounding a heart. The next circle to this consists of the soldiers. And they, indeed, surround the hill which forms another mountain on the extended mount, like a rising breast, and enables those to see the king who are at the greatest distance from him. But those surround the foot of the mountain who are permitted to be present at the spectacle. And these only celebrate with propitious acclamations that part of the ceremony which they behold. Those, however, who have the power of voting, when the king invokes the Gods, and those to whom this office belongs, excite the whole assembly (as if divinity was present, and paid attention to the election), and the name of one of the candidates for the kingdom being announced, the soldiers elevate their hands. But the *comastæ*, (or those that furnish banquets) the ædiles and prophets, give their votes, these being, indeed, less numerous, but possessing the greatest power in the election. For the vote of a prophet is equal to a hundred hands; that of one of the comastæ to twenty; and that of an ædile to ten hands. Another name of the royal candidates being announced, hands are elevated and votes given. And if the number of the votes happens to be nearly equal, then the king by adding his vote to the part which exceeds causes it to be much greater than it was; but if he adds it to the less part, he renders it equal to the other part. In this case it is necessary to dissolve the assembly of voters, and pray to the Gods, supplicating them for a long time; and sanctifying themselves in a more irreprehensible manner, till the Gods indicate the king, not through veils, or usual signs, but openly, and the people with their own ears become witnesses of the choice of the Gods. Such was the usual mode of election, the choice sometimes falling on one, and sometimes on another person. But in the election of Osiris and Typhos, the Gods without the performance of any sacred ceremonies by the priests, became at first immediately

visible, and themselves presiding conducted the affair. Each of them also appointed their priests, and it was obvious to everyone on what account they were present; though if they had not been present, every hand and every vote would have expected the name of the younger of the royal youths. With us, however, great things are pre-indicated to greater and wiser men, and divinity signifies they will happen whether they are for the better or the worse, by portents of an admirable nature.

Osiris, therefore, as it was lawful for him to do, remained in that place into which he was at first brought. But Typhos, being impatient of delay, was restless and disturbed, and anxious to know the state of the election; and at length could not refrain from attempting to corrupt the suffrages. Not sparing, therefore, either himself, or the royal laws, and plunging into the river, in which he was borne along, swimming, and doing and suffering everything, and derided by those who saw him, he at length passed over the stream; fancying that he was not seen except by those to whom he came, and to whom he had promised a pecuniary reward. He was, however, recognised by everyone, and everyone hated both him and his design. Yet no one thought fit to reprove an insane disposition. Hence it happened to this most miserable man, that while he was himself present, and in his own hearing, he was rejected by the decision of everyone, and all hands were against him. The Gods also execrated him. But Osiris being sent for came, not at all solicitous about the event, the Gods, the priests, and in short, the whole assembly, meeting him with sacred crowns, and sacred pipes, on the bank of the river in which the ship destined to receive the new king from the Libyc coast, ought to sail. Mighty signs likewise were immediately exhibited from the heavens, accompanied with divine voices indicative of good, and every kind of prodigy from which a judgment of futurity is formed both in great and small affairs,—all which portended a prosperous empire to the Egyptians. Hence dæmons of the worse part [*i.e.*, evil dæmons] could not endure to remain quiet, nor to bear with mildness this felicity of men, but thought fit to attack it, and became tumid [with rage]; in consequence of which something of dæmoniacal stratagem was portended. After Osiris, therefore, was initiated by his father in the royal mysteries, [the Gods] clearly announced to him, as perspicuously knowing everything, both a certain abundance of good, and that it would be requisite to exterminate his brother, who was born with a destiny unpropitious both to the Egyptians, and to the house of his father, if he did not intend to confound all things, in order that his brother might neither see nor hear of the prosperity and fertility of Egypt, during the reign of Osiris. For no good could be borne by the nature of Typhos. The Gods also unfolded to Osiris the twofold essence of souls, and the necessary opposition existing between terrene and supernal souls. In

consequence of this, they thought it requisite that he should subvert and cut off the nature which was hostile to the beneficent and divine co-ordination of things,* not being at all prevented from so doing through what is called alliance by mankind. They likewise informed him what calamities would happen to himself, to the Egyptians, to the neighbouring kingdoms, and to those in subjection to the Egyptians, if he was negligent in this respect. For they said that neither would the evil be debile which would befall him, nor would a casual circumspection be sufficient to exclude and weaken both the obvious and latent attacks of Typhos. For, they added, that a strong tribe of envious and malignant dæmons were present with Typhos as his patrons, to whom also he was allied, and by whom he was hurled forth into light, in order that they might employ him as an instrument of the evil which they inflict on mankind. And that proceeding in this path, they had procreated, nourished, and performed the office of a midwife to Typhos, and educated him in an appropriate manner, that he might eventually be of great advantage to them. Nevertheless they thought that one thing was yet wanting to the accomplishment of all his wishes, *viz.*, that he should be environed with the strength of empire. For thus he would be completely perfect, being both willing and able to perpetrate mighty evils. But you (said some one of the Gods) they hate, as the gain of mankind, but their detriment. *For the calamities of nations are the banquets of evil dæmons.* Again, therefore, and again the Gods admonished Osiris that he should expel his brother, and send him to some distant land, as they both knew and saw that Osiris was naturally mild, in consequence of which they were at length forced to tell him that for a certain time he would endure [the depravity of his brother], but that at length Typhos would latently betray both him and all men, and in reality exchange the benignant name of brotherly-love for the greatest of calamities. Osiris, however, said, in answer to this, "While you are propitious and afford assistance, I shall not fear my brother, though he should remain, and I shall be safe from the indignation of [evil] dæmons. For you being willing, can easily procure a remedy for what may have been overseen by me."

But the father of Osiris said in reply, "You do not conceive rightly in this affair, my son. For that portion of the divine nature which is in the world is conversant with mundane affairs, yet for the most part it energizes

* The twofold co-ordination of things according to the Pythagoreans, or the opposition which everywhere prevails in the universe, and also the fertile and barren periods which alternately take place in the sublunary region, appear to be indicated by this Egyptian fable. But this opposition in the Gods, is that of bound and infinity; in intellects, it is that of sameness and difference; in souls, that of the circle of sameness, and the circle of difference; but in bodies, it is that of heaven and generation. And universally the division is into that which adorns, and that which is adorned, that which fills, and that which is filled.

according to its first power, and is filled with intelligible beauty. For there [*i.e.*, in the intelligible world] there is another super-mundane genus of Gods, which connectedly contains all beings as far as to the last of things. But this genus of Gods is immoveable, and has no tendency whatever to matter. It is also a blessed spectacle to those beings who are Gods by nature [or the mundane Gods]. And to behold the fountain of it, is a still more blessed vision. This genus likewise because it abides with itself is exuberantly full of good, being exuberantly full of itself. But the good of these Gods consists in a conversion to the God who reigns in the intelligible world. Nevertheless the energy of good is not simple, nor of one form. But these divinities direct their attention to the parts of the world, deducing as much as possible the energy which consists in contemplation to the subject of their government. That which is pure and entire, therefore, in these, is immediately arranged under that first essence. But they arrange the natures proximate to themselves, and a succession of orders descends in a continued series, as far as to the last of beings. All things likewise enjoy the providential care of first natures through those of a middle rank, yet not equally. For if this were the case, that which is successive would have no subsistence; but beings in descending would be debilitated, till by confounding and adulterating their order, things would cease to exist. A thing of this kind also takes place in these inferior abodes. The essence of that which is in generation being naturally erratic, is allotted the extremity of a corporeal destiny, and the most obnoxious to corruption. But to the heavens the first and undecaying condition of being is distributed, and a form analogous to that of soul. Hence, what they are, said he (pointing out the Gods), in the heavens, that dæmons are in the incessantly mutable elements. For they are naturally full of stupid astonishment and audacity, and in consequence of being separated by so great an interval from the heavens, have no perception of the elegant arrangement of divine natures. Since, therefore, the dregs of beings is not sufficient to its own preservation; for it is in a flowing condition, and does not stop for existence, but imitates it by becoming to be; and since dæmons as being allied to this nature, have a destructive essence; hence it is necessary that divinity should direct his attention to these lower regions and impart certain principles, which the sublunary world follows for a time in a becoming manner, *viz.*, for as long a time as that which is imparted is sufficient. But as instruments which are drawn by strings are moved indeed, even when the principle which imparted motion to the machine ceases to act, yet are not moved *ad infinitum*; for they have not inwardly the fountain of motion; but are moved as long as the power imparted to them prevails, and is not by being separated from its proper origin, dissolved in its progression; after

the same manner, my dear Osiris, conceive that it is well for a divine nature to exist, and at the same time not exist in this terrestrial abode,* but to be sent into it from another region. On this account, souls are rarely good in these realms, though they may be seen in them. And the Gods, who are the inspective guardians of generation when they direct their attention to it, perform indeed that which is appropriate to them, yet not according to their primary life; for their blessedness consists in something different from this, because it is more blessed primarily to enjoy the participations of beauty and order from that which is first, than to adorn things of an inferior nature. For the latter is a turning away from, but the former a conversion to [primary good]. *You also have been initiated in those mysteries in which there are two pair of eyes, and it is requisite that the pair which are beneath should be closed when the pair that are above them perceive, and that when the pair above are closed, those which are beneath should be opened.* Think, therefore, that this is an enigma indicative of contemplation and action, the intermediate nature alternately energizing according to each of these; but so as to energise more perfectly in the better of these, and to associate with the inferior from necessity alone. Hence these are the works of the Gods, affecting, indeed, things necessary to the world, yet not imparting precedaneous goods, because men also at one time apply themselves to the management of domestic concerns, in a greater and less degree; but at another time philosophize, and in this latter energy are more divine than in the former. From these things, therefore, understand what I say. Do not request the Gods to be your associates, since their precedaneous employment consists in contemplation and the government of the first parts of the world. They also dwell in the heavens, and are at a great distance from the earth. Yet you must not think that they are without employment, or that their descent hither is perpetual. For they descend according to orderly periods of time, for the† purpose of imparting the principle of a beneficent motion in the republics of mankind, after the example of the framers of machines. But this happens when they harmonize a kingdom, and send hither for this purpose souls allied to themselves. For this providence is divine and most ample, which frequently through one man pays attention to a countless multitude of men. These, therefore, in providentially inspecting human affairs must also necessarily at the same time be attentive to their own. It is requisite, however, that you who are engaged in foreign concerns, should remember whence you are derived,

* *I.e.*, a divine nature is not present locally in the earth, but is present by its energies and illuminations.

† By the descent of the Gods to the earth, nothing more is meant than the aptitude of terrestrial natures to receive their illuminations. For the Gods always contemplate, and always energize providentially, but earthly natures are not always adapted to receive their beneficent energies in a becoming manner.

and that you engage in this superintendance of the affairs of others, as in a certain servitude to the world. But you should endeavour to elevate yourself, and not to draw down the Gods. You should likewise pay every possible attention to yourself, as if living in a camp among foreigners, and as a divine soul among [evil] dæmons, whom it is reasonable to suppose, as they are earth-begotten, will be hostile to and indignant with any one who within their boundaries observes laws that belong to another tribe of beings. You must be satisfied, therefore, in being vigilant both by night and by day, and in making this the only object of your care, that you being but one may not be vanquished by many, a stranger by natives. For there is indeed in this terrestrial abode, the sacred tribe of heroes who pay attention to mankind, and who are able to give them assistance, even in the smallest concerns, and there is also a more ancient good.* This heroic tribe is as it were a colony, established here, in order that this terrene abode may not be left destitute of a better nature. These heroes also extend their hands in those things in which they are able to give assistance. But when Matter excites her own proper blossoms (*i.e.*, progeny) to war against the soul, the resistance made by the heroic tribe is but small when the Gods are absent. For everything is strong in its appropriate place.

These dæmons, however, who are the progeny of matter wish to make souls their own, and the manner in which they attack them is as follows: It is not possible in the earth that there should be some one who has not a portion of the irrational soul. And this, indeed, the multitude hurl forth as their defence, but the wise man suspends from his essence. All souls, however, necessarily have this part. Evil dæmons through this, as through that which is allied to them, invade and betray the animal. For in reality that which then takes place resembles a siege. But as coals are swiftly enkindled by torches, through their adaptation to fire, so the nature of these dæmons being passive, or rather being a living and moveable passion, when it approaches to the soul, excites the passion which is in it, and produces it from capacity into energy. For each thing operates by juxtaposition. But every thing which suffers is co-assimilated to that which acts upon it. Thus dæmons inflame desire, thus they inflame anger, and all such evils as are the sisters of these; associating with souls through the parts that are adapted to themselves, which naturally perceive the presence of these dæmons, and are excited and corroborated by them, rising against intellect,

* *I.e.*, the good arising from the super-mundane providential inspection of divinity. Hence Plato in the 9th book of his *Republic* most divinely says, "Whatever comes from the Gods to the man who is beloved by the Gods, will all be the best possible, unless he has some necessary ill from former miscarriage. Hence, if the just man happens to be in poverty or disease, or in any other of those seeming evils, these things issue to him in something good either whilst alive or dead. *For never at any time is he neglected by the Gods who inclines earnestly to endeavour to become just, and practises virtue as far as it is possible for man to resemble God.*"

till they either vanquish the whole soul, or despair of its caption. This then is the greatest of contests. For there is neither any time, nor any mode, nor any place, in which they cease to attack, and thence invade the soul from whence no one would expect an assault. Their snares are everywhere, their machines everywhere, and on all sides they excite an intestine war, till they either vanquish or abandon the attempt.* But the Gods from on high are spectators of these beautiful contests, in which you will be crowned, as I also wish you may in those of the second rank. I am, however, afraid, that though you will vanquish in the former, you will be vanquished in the latter contests. For when the divine part of the soul does not follow the inferior part, but frequently restrains it, and is converted to itself, then in process of time it becomes so corroborated as to sustain all attacks, and so resplendent as it were, that it no longer receives the influxes of dæmons. Thus, therefore, the whole animal then becomes truly divine and one. And this is a celestial plant in the earth, which does not receive a foreign ingraftment, so as to produce fruits from it, but changes that which is foreign into its own nature. Evil dæmons, therefore, despairing of obtaining the victory over it, then entirely contend in the second contest, which consists in endeavouring to extirpate this plant from the earth, and destroy it, as in no respect adapted to themselves. For they are ashamed of being vanquished, if some one of a nature foreign to themselves subdues them, and is resident in the places which belong to them; this being in reality, and appearing to be a trophy of victory. For a man of this kind is not only a detriment to them in himself, but causes others also to revolt from their dominion. For when virtue is the object of emulation, vice must necessarily perish. On this account, therefore, these dæmons endeavour by stratagems to destroy every one, whether he be a private person or a potentate, who refuses obedience to the laws of matter. As you, however, are a king, it will be easier for you than for a private person to guard against their attacks. For they assault externally, if they do not make any progress in their internal attempts, by war, sedition, and by such things as injure the body, by which, however, that king will not be in the least subdued who pays attention to himself. For that is not to

* Proclus, in his elegant hymn to the Sun, alludes to these dæmons and their attacks, in the following lines:

"Ferocious dæmons, noxious to mankind,
Dread the dire anger of thy rapid scourge;
Dæmons who machinate a thousand ills
Pregnant with ruin to our wretched souls,
That, merg'd beneath life's dreadful-sounding sea,
In body's chains they willingly may toil,
Nor e'er remember in the dark abyss
The splendid palace of their sire sublime.

be conquered in which strength and wisdom are conjoined. But when these are separated from each other, strength being without skill, and wisdom being imbecile, they are easily subdued.

The conception, indeed, my son, of your forefathers in the formation of sacred images, is perfectly admirable. For the Egyptians make a two-fold representation of the dæmon Hermes, placing a young by the side of an elderly man, intending to signify by this, that he who rightly inspects [sacred concerns] ought to be both intelligent and strong, one of these being imperfect in affording utility without the other. On this account, also, a sphinx is established by us in the vestibules of our temples, as a sacred symbol of the conjunction of these two goods; the beast in this figure signifying strength, but the man wisdom.* For strength when destitute of the ruling aid of wisdom, is borne along with stupid astonishment, mingling and confounding all things; and intellect is useless for the purposes of action, when it is deprived of the subserviency of hands. But virtue and fortune

* The following explanation of the sphinx is extracted from the notes to my translation of Pausanias: The sphinx, according to Lasus Hermioneus, was the daughter of Echidna and Typhon; and according to Clearchus, she had the head and hands of a virgin, the body of a dog, a human voice, the tail of a dragon, the claws of a lion, and the wings of a bird. But it appears to me that the ancients, by the sphinx, designed to represent to us the nature of the phantasy or imagination. In order to be convinced of which, it is necessary to observe, that the rational soul, or the true man, consists of intellect, dianoia or the discursive energy of reason, and opinion; but the fictitious man, or the irrational soul, commences from the phantasy, under which desire and anger subsist. Hence the basis of the rational life is *opinion*, but the summit of the irrational life is the phantasy. But the phantasy, as Iamblichus beautifully observes, grows upon, as it were, and fashions all the powers of the soul; exciting in opinion the illuminations from the senses, and fixing in that life which is extended with body, the impressions which descend from intellect. Hence, says Proclus, it folds itself about the indivisibility of true intellect, conforms itself to all formless species, and becomes perfectly everything, from which dianoia and our indivisible reason consist.

This being the case, as the phantasy is all things passively which intellect is impassively (on which account Aristotle calls the phantasy passive intellect) hence the head of the sphinx is human, but at the same time of the feminine sex; this sex being the image, from its passivity, of the irrational life. By the sphinx having the body of a dog, the discriminating power of phantasy is implied: for the dog is the image of the discriminating power of the soul. Hence Hercules drew up this power from Hades, *viz.*, from the obscurity of a sensible life. But by her having the tail of a dragon, and the claws of a lion, the communication of the phantasy with desire and anger is signified. And her wings are images of the elevating powers, which the phantasy naturally possesses; for it is re-elevated in conjunction with the returning soul, to the region every way resplendent with divine light. But the riddles of the sphinx are images of the obscure and intricate nature of the phantasy. He, therefore, who is unable to solve the riddles of the sphinx, *i.e.*, who cannot comprehend the dark and perplexed nature of the phantasy, will be drawn into her embraces and torn in pieces, *viz.*, the phantasy in such a one will subject to its power the rational life, cause its indivisible energies to become divisible, and thus destroy as much as possible its very essence. But he who, like Œdipus, is able to solve the enigmas of the sphinx, or, in other words, to comprehend the dark essence of his phantasy, will, by illuminating its obscurity with the light of intellect, cause it, by becoming lucid throughout, to be no longer what it was before.

Hence we may see the propriety of the Egyptians placing the sphinx in a *vestibule* of the temple of Isis, who is the same with Minerva. For what the phantasy is in the microcosm man, that æther is in the universe. But opinion may be called the vestibule of the rational soul, and the rational soul is as it were the temple of that intellectual illumination which proceeds from Minerva. In this vestibule, therefore, the phantasy is seated. And in a similar manner æther is seated in the vestibule of that divine soul, which is suspended from the deity of Minerva, and which may be called her temple. So that æther is the sphinx of the universe.

are scarcely indeed found to unite, and when they do, it is in great characters such as yourself in whom they concur. No longer, therefore, molest the Gods, since you are able, if willing, to be saved by your own internal resources. For it is not fit that the Gods should always be absent from their own abodes, and be willingly conversant with foreign and inferior places; unless it is impious in us to use in a becoming manner the auxiliaries which are disseminated in us for the purpose of preserving terrene natures in order and a continued succession. For those who assert this, must admit that the Gods again descend from necessity before the appointed time, to the providential inspection of terrene affairs. But when the harmony is dissolved and becomes old, which the Gods adapted to things, they again descend * hither that they may call it forth into energy, and resuscitate it when it is as it were expiring. They likewise are delighted to effect this, accomplishing in so doing a certain subserviency to the nature of the world. They also descend when this harmony is corrupted and broken through the fault of the natures that receive it, when in no other way whatever is it possible for these terrene affairs to be preserved. Divinity, therefore, is not excited by circumstances of a trifling nature, nor when an error is committed about this or that particular; for it is necessary that the affair should be something of great moment, for the sake of which some one of the blessed descends to this abode. When, however, the whole order of things, and the greatest things are corrupted, then it is necessary that the Gods should descend for the purpose of imparting the principle of another orderly distribution of things. By no means, therefore, should men be indignant, since the evils which happen to them are spontaneous, nor ought they to accuse the Gods of not providentially attending to their affairs. For providence requires that men should exert what they derive from themselves. Nor is it wonderful that there should be evils in the abode of evils; but it is admirable if there is anything here which is not of this kind. For such a thing is a stranger and foreign. This also is from providence, through which, if we are not negligent, but employ what we possess from it, it is possible for us to be perfectly happy. For providence is not like the mother of an infant recently born, who must necessarily be occupied in repelling whatever may accede of a painful nature, since the child is yet imperfect, and incapable of assisting himself. But providence resembles that mother, who having

* When certain places and parts of the earth lose the aptitude which they once possessed of receiving divine illuminations, then they are said in fables to be deserted by the Gods; and when they recover this aptitude, and thus partake of the illuminations of the Gods, then the Gods are said to descend to such places, and this recovery of the participation of divine influence is fabulously called the birthday of those Gods by whom this influence is imparted. The recovery of this aptitude, also, is owing to the providential energies of the Gods, and is as it were a subordinate and preparatory illumination, the precursor of one that is precedaneous.

caused her child to grow, and furnished him with arms, orders him to use them, and repel the evils by which he may be attacked. Philosophize therefore always about these things, and consider the knowledge of them as a thing of the greatest importance to mankind. For men who are pious and at the same time solicitous, admit that there is a providence, and pay attention to themselves, and do not conceive that the conversion of divinity [to the superintendance of mundane affairs] and the use of virtue are discordant with each other. Farewell. But prevent if you are wise the designs of your brother, and be the first to subvert your own fate and that of the Egyptians. For this is possible. But if you yield and are remiss, expect at a late period the assistance of the Gods.

Having thus said, he departed the same way with the Gods. But Osiris was left on the earth (though he was a thing of which the earth was by no means worthy), and immediately strove to exterminate evils from it, not employing any force for this purpose, but sacrificing to Persuasion, to the Muses and Graces, he rendered all men voluntarily obedient to the laws. But as the Gods abundantly supplied the king with all such gifts as the air, the water, and the earth afford, he yielded the enjoyment of these to the multitude, but abandoned himself all indulgence, and instead of it engaged in every kind of labour, slept but little, was full of care, and in short, was without leisure, in order that all his subjects might have leisure. Hence he filled all men with both internal and external goods, not only individuals, but families and their kindred, cities, and whole provinces. For he excited virtuous emulation, ordering that every discipline and every pursuit should be undertaken with a view to this one thing. He likewise appointed rewards for those who governed men in the best manner, and who made the governed to resemble their governors. But it is necessary that everything which is honoured should increase. At the same time, therefore, the love of all erudition was augmented, both that which pertains to the mind, and that which depends on the tongue. For those who excelled in a thing of this latter kind, were no longer to be seen among the vulgar herd, but were splendid through the honours which they received from the king, in consequence of imparting the art which is subservient to wisdom; because intellect proceeds into light clothed with words, and is either well or badly adorned, just as some men are seen to be of an elegant shape, but others deformed. Osiris therefore thought it fit, that preparatory disciplines should be honoured; for he conceived erudition to be the fountain of virtue. Piety, likewise, then flourished among the Egyptians more than at any other time. And these indeed were the goods of the soul, in which the Egyptians abounded during the reign of Osiris, so that the whole region then resembled a school of virtue, youth looking to one

leader only, performing that one thing which they saw, and speaking that one thing which they heard.

With respect to wealth, also, Osiris himself indeed neglected it, but was anxious in the extreme that others might obtain it, himself refusing all gifts, but being most munificent to others. He likewise liberated cities from the payment of tribute, supplied them [from his own treasury] when they were in want, raised that which was fallen, and applied a remedy to that which was in a ruinous condition. And one city, indeed, he rendered more ample, but another he beautified; this he built, and that which was deserted by its inhabitants he repeopled. It is necessary, therefore, that an individual should be a partaker of common goods; but Osiris did not desist from paying attention to this or that man, and from endeavouring that while he reigned no one might be seen lamenting and weeping. Nor was Osiris ignorant of the wants of any one, or of what prevented any one from being blessed. Hence, one man requested Osiris to confer on him the honour which was justly his due, and it was accordingly conferred on him; but another who applied himself to books, and had not sufficient leisure to procure the necessaries of life, was supplied by Osiris with food in the Prytanæum. Another who neglected human honours, and who was sufficiently affluent, but perhaps was ashamed of his subserviency to the public, did not escape the notice of Osiris, who liberated him from his employment, not being importuned by him for this purpose, but preventing his solicitation, conceiving through his reverence for wisdom, that such a one should be a law to himself, and should be free, as a sacred thing dedicated to divinity. In short, no one was defrauded of his desert, unless he deserved some evil; for in this case he did not reward him. For Osiris was ambitious to vanquish the most impudent men, by gentleness of manners and beneficent works. And through these means he thought he should be able to subdue his brother and his faction, by changing their natural disposition through the abundance of virtue; in which opinion however he was deceived. For *envy is not repressed by virtue, but is in a greater degree inflamed by it. For if it naturally adheres to good, the greater the good is, the more the pain of envy is increased.*

Some time after this, Typhos obtained the kingdom by fraud and force, and Osiris was banished. But during the evils arising from the tyrannical government of Typhos, some God manifestly appeared to a certain philosopher, who was a stranger in Egypt, and who had received great benefits from Osiris, and ordered him to endure the present calamities, because they were months only and not years in which the fates had destined that the Egyptian sceptres should raise the nails of the wild

beasts,* and depress the heads of the sacred birds.† But this is an arcane symbol. And the philosophic stranger above-mentioned, knew that a representation of this was engraved n obelisks, and in the sacred recesses of the temples. The divinity also unfolded to him the meaning of the sacred sculpture, and gave him a sign of the time in which it would be verified. *For when those, said he, who are now in power, shall endeavour to make an innovation in our religion, then in a short time after expect that the* GIANTS, *meaning by these, men of another nation, shall be entirely expelled, being agitated by their own avenging furies.* If, however, some remains of the sedition should still exist, and the whole should not be at once extinguished, but Typhos should still remain in the seat of government, nevertheless do not despair of the Gods. The following, also, is another symbol for you. *When we shall purify the air which surrounds the earth, and which is defiled with the breath of the impious, with fire and water, then the punishment of the rest will also follow, and then immediately expect a better order of things, Typhos being removed. For we expel such like prodigies by the devastation of fire and thunder.* In consequence of this, the stranger considered that to be a felicitous circumstance which had before appeared to him to be dreadful, and no longer bore with molestation a necessary continuance in life, through which he would be an eye-witness of the advent of the Gods. For it exceeded the power of human sagacity to conjecture, that so powerful a multitude as were then collected together in arms, and who even in time of peace were by law obliged to be armed, should be vanquished without any opposition. He considered with himself, therefore, how these things could be accomplished; for they appeared to surpass the power of reason. *But after no great length of time, a certain depraved fragment of religion, and an adulteration of divine worship, like that of money as it were, prevailed, which the ancient law exterminated from cities, shutting the doors against impiety, and expelling it to a great distance from the walls.*‡

*I.e., material dæmons, *the wild beasts of the earth*, as they are called in the Chaldean Oracles.

† *I.e.*, the whole choir of beneficent natures superior to man. But by the depression of the heads of the sacred birds, the inaptitude of persons and places to receive divine influence, is denoted.

‡ What is here said by Synesius, reminds me of the following extraordinary prophecy in the Asclepian dialogue, ascribed to Hermes Trismegistus, a Latin translation only of which is extant, and is generally believed by the learned to have been made by Apuleius. The passage I allude to is the following :—

"Are you ignorant, O Asclepius, that Egypt is the image of heaven, or, which is more true, a translation and descent of every thing which is governed and exercised in heaven? And if it may be said, our land is truly the temple of the whole world. Nevertheless, because it becomes wise men to foreknow all things, it is not lawful you should be ignorant that the time will come when it may seem that the Egyptians have in vain, with a pious mind and sedulous religion, paid attention to divinity, and all their holy veneration shall become void and of no effect. For divinity shall return back from earth to heaven, Egypt shall be forsaken, and the land which was the seat of divinity shall be destitute of religion, and deprived of the presence of the Gods. *For when strangers shall possess and fill this region and land, there shall not only be a neglect of religion, but, which is more miserable, there shall be laws enacted against religion, piety, and divine worship; they shall be prohibited, and punishments shall be*

Typhos, however, did not himself introduce this impiety, for he feared the Egyptian multitude, but for this purpose called in the assistance of the Barbarians, and erected a temple in the city, having previously subverted the laws of his country. When these things therefore came to pass, the stranger began to think that this was the event which divinity had predicted. And perhaps, said he, I shall be a spectator of what will follow. He, likewise, then learnt some particulars about Osiris which would shortly happen, and others which would take place at some greater

inflicted on their votaries. Then this most holy land, the seat of places consecrated to divinity, and of temples, shall be full of sepulchres and dead bodies. O Egypt, Egypt, fables alone shall remain of thy religion, and these such as will be incredible to posterity, and words alone shall be left engraved in stones, narrating thy pious deeds. The Scythian, also, or Indian, or some other similar nation, shall inhabit Egypt. For divinity shall return to heaven, all its inhabitants shall die, and thus Egypt, bereft both of God and man, shall be deserted. I call on thee, O most holy river, and predict to thee future events. Thou shalt burst forth with a torrent of blood, full even to thy banks, and thy divine waters shall not only be polluted with blood, but the land shall be inundated with it, and the number of the dead shall exceed that of the living. He likewise who survives, shall only by his language be known to be an Egyptian, but by his deeds he will appear to be a stranger. Why do you weep, O Asclepius? Egypt shall experience more ample, and much worse evils than these, though she was once holy, and the greatest lover of the Gods on the earth, by the desert of her religion. And she who was alone the reductor of sanctity, and the mistress of piety, will be an example of the greatest cruelty. Then also, through the weariness of men, the world will not appear to be an admirable and adorable thing This whole good, a better than which, as an object of perception, there neither is, nor was, nor will be, will be in danger, and will be grievous to men. Hence this whole world will be despised, and will not be beloved, though it is the immutable work of God, a glorious fabric, a good compounded with a multiform variety of images, a machine of the will of God, who in his work gave his suffrage without envy, that all things should be one. It is also a multiform collected heap, capable of being venerated, praised and loved by those that behold it. For darkness shall be preferred to light, and death shall be judged to be more useful than life. *No one shall look up to heaven. The religious man shall be accounted insane, the irreligious shall be thought wise, the furious brave, and the worst of men shall be considered a good man.* For the soul and all things about it, by which it is either naturally immortal, or conceives that it shall attain to immortality, conformably to what I have explained to you, shall not only be the subject of laughter, but shall be considered as vanity. *Believe me, likewise, that a capital punishment shall be appointed for him who applies himself to the religion of intellect. New statutes and new laws shall be established, and nothing religious or which is worthy of heaven, or celestial concerns, shall be heard, or believed by the mind. There will be a lamentable departure of the Gods from men,* noxious angels† will alone remain, who being mingled with human nature will violently impel the miserable men [of that time] to war, to rapine, to fraud, and to everything contrary to the nature of the soul.* Then the earth shall be in a preternatural state, the sea shall not be sailed in, nor shall the heavens accord with the course of the stars, nor the course of the stars continue in the heavens. *Every divine voice shall be dumb by a necessary silence,* the fruits of the earth shall be corrupted, nor shall the earth be prolific, and the air itself shall languish with a sorrowful torpor. These events and such an old age of the world as this shall take place, such irreligion, inordination, and unreasonableness of all good. When all these things shall happen, O Asclepius, then that lord and father, the God who is first in power, and the one governor of the world, looking into the manners and voluntary deeds [of men], and by his will, which is the benignty of God, resisting vices, and recalling the error arising from the corruption of all things, washing away likewise all malignity, by a deluge, or consuming it by fire, or bringing it to an end by disease and pestilence dispersed in different places, will recall the world to its ancient form, in order that the world itself may appear to be an adorable and admirable production, and God the fabricator and

* Proclus finding that this was partially the case in his time, says prophetically in the introduction to his MS. Commentary on the Parmenides of Plato, " With respect to this form of philosophy [*viz.*, of the philosophy of Plato], I should say that it came to men for the benefit of terrestrial souls; *that it might be instead of statues, instead of temples, instead of the whole of sacred institutions, and the leader of salvation both to the men that now are, and to those that shall exist hereafter.*"

† *I.e.*, evil dæmons.

distance of time, *viz.*, when the boy Horus would choose as his associate in battle, a wolf instead of a lion. But who the wolf is, is a sacred narration, which it is not holy to divulge; even in the form of a fable."

Typhos, however, through his tyranny, was at length dethroned, and Osiris recalled from exile; and Synesius towards the end of this treatise observes, "that the blessed body which revolves in a circle, is the cause of the events in the sublunary world. For both are parts of the universe, and they have a certain relation to each other. If, therefore, the cause of generation in the things which surround us, originates in the natures which are above us, it follows that the seeds of things which happen here descend from thence. And if someone should add, since astronomy imparts credibility to this, that there are *apocatastatic** periods of the stars and spheres, some of which are simple but others compounded, such a one

restorer of so great a work, may be celebrated by all that shall then exist, with frequent solemn praises, and benedictions. For this *geniture*† of the world, is the reformation of all good things, and the most holy and religious restitution of the nature of it, the course of time being accomplished;‡ since time is perpetual, and always was without a beginning. For the will of God is without beginning, is always the same, and is everywhere external."

Of this very remarkable extract, it is necessary to observe in the first place, that it was principally made by me from the edition of the *Asclepian Dialogue*, by Ficinus, as he appears to have had a more correct manuscript in his possession than any that have been consulted by more modern editors. Of this the learned, and at the same time philosophic, reader, will be immediately convinced, by comparing this extract with the same part of that dialogue in the most modern editions of it. In the second place, that this dialogue is of genuine antiquity and no forgery, is, I think, unquestionably evident from neither Lactantius nor Augustin having any doubt of its authenticity, though it was their interest to have proved it to be spurious if they could, because it predicts, which is the third thing especially deserving of remark, that the memorials of the martyrs should succeed in the place of the temples of the Gods. Hence Augustin concludes this to be a prophecy or prediction made *instinctu fallacis spiritûs, by the instinct or suggestion of a deceitful spirit.* But that this prediction was accomplished is evident, as Dr. Cudworth observes in his *True Intellectual System of the Universe*, p. 329, from the following passages of Theodoret, which I shall quote as translated by the Doctor. "Now the martyrs have utterly abolished and blotted out of the minds of men, the memory of those who were formerly called Gods." And again, "Our Lord hath now brought his dead (*i.e.*, his martyrs) into the room and place (*i.e.*, into the temples) of the Gods; whom he hath sent away empty, and bestowed their honour upon these his martyrs. For now, instead of the festivals of Jupiter and Bacchus, are celebrated those of Peter and Paul, Thomas and Sergius, and other holy martyrs." Antoninus, the philosopher, also, according to Eunapius, predicted the very same thing, *viz.*, that after his decease, the magnificent temple of Serapis in Egypt, together with the rest, should be demolished, and the temples of the Gods be turned into sepulchres. And in the fourth and last place, the intelligent reader who compares this prediction with what is said about the philosophic stranger by Synesius in the foregoing extract will immediately see, that the former wonderfully accords with the latter.

* *I.e.*, Restitutions to a pristine form or condition.

† By the *geniture* of the world, the greater *apocatastasis* is signified, as is evident from Julius Firmicus; which restoration of things to their pristine state is, according to that author, accomplished in the space of three hundred thousand years. This great period comprehends in itself, according to Petosyris and Necepso, six less periods, the last of which is under the dominion of Mercury, and abounds with improbity of every kind and inventions full of evil. "Quia nobile ingenium in homine," (says Firmicus) "unum vitæ cursum servare non potest, ex variis institutis moribusque confusis malitiæ crevit improbitas, et vitæ scelerum flagitia, gens hominum hoc tempore, facinorosis machinationibus, et invenit et tradidit. Hac ex causa, ultimum tempus Mercurio tradendum putaverunt, ut ad imitationem istius syderis, inventa plena malitia, gens hominum conciperet potestatem."

‡ *I.e.*, a mundane period being finished.

will partly accord with the Egyptians, and partly with the Grecians, and will be perfectly wise from both, conjoining intellect to science. A man of this kind, therefore, will not deny that in consequence of the same motions returning, effects also will return together with their causes; and that lives on the earth, generations, educations, dispositions and fortunes, will be the same with those that formerly existed. We must not wonder, therefore, if we behold a very ancient history verified in life, and should see things which flourished before our times, accord with what is unfolded in this narration, and besides this, perceive that the forms which are inserted in matter, are consentaneous to the arcana of a fable."

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THE RE-INCARNATING EGO.

(Reprinted from the "New Californian," July, 1892.)

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The Evolution of Man.

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THE RE-INCARNATING EGO.

(Reprinted from the "New Californian," July, 1892.)

A PROPER conception of re-incarnation on the human plane, or the repeated rebirth of the same human soul in new bodies, after the old have been destroyed by death, requires a close inquiry as to how much and what portion of the man as we know him returns to earth by this process. This will be best accomplished, perhaps, by a study of the nature and history of the Higher Manas, or his true Re-incarnating Ego, including necessarily that of its reflection in matter, the Lower Manas, or Personal Self.

The material Universe, according to Theosophic teaching, is embodied consciousness, or consciousness of infinite gradations, clothed in equally infinite expressions of form. As the Universe ebbs and flows from subjective to objective states throughout the eternities of Duration, it follows that worlds appear and disappear endlessly, the Great Pralaya even, being only a subjective arc of larger immensity. In the life history of all worlds, as is proven by the records now visible in the heavens, there comes a time when they cool down sufficiently to become habitable; when they pass through this stage; when, by the ebbing of their life force, or the completion of their limiting cycle, humanities can no longer exist on them in material form. There is no doubt but that their minor pralayas or deaths overtake them with the consciousness of their entities in states of infinite diversity such as we now perceive upon the earth. Hence, there would be those, passing through the human stage, overtaken when their world became uninhabitable for them; for the life cycle of a planet pursues its course perfectly uninterrupted and uncontrolled by the evolution of any humanity upon it. So, were pralaya to strike for this earth to-day, would every entity, human, animal or elemental, be arrested in its material evolution and be compelled to remain in subjective states, until matter in other worlds had arrived at stages capable of affording them material expression in suitable forms.

This has happened to our Higher Egos, it may be an infinite number of times, for who can estimate the period necessary in material states of consciousness for them to arrive at their present stage? At any rate, when their last world went into pralaya they had not yet passed beyond the desire for material or sensuous existence, and so were, under the law of cause and effect, drawn to bodies which nature, or the lower "Builders" of Theosophy, had been preparing for their occupation during those interminable periods which even geology is beginning to recognize as necessary actors in human evolution. This re-incarnation of already highly-advanced

entities in human-animal forms, prepared for them under quite a distinct phase of the triple-sided process of evolutionary activity, is the key to the whole scheme of human evolution on this planet, as well as to the many otherwise hopelessly insoluble problems in human consciousness, such as clairvoyance, prophetic dream, and the "buried selves," so strangely dug out of their unsuspected graves by hypnotic processes.

If, then, the Higher Manas, or our Re-incarnating Egos, had evolved self-consciousness upon material planes on other worlds, in former planetary manvantaras, it does not, it seems to me, follow as a necessary corollary that they had also evolved perfect spiritual self-consciousness, or self-consciousness on spiritual planes. On the contrary, it seems reasonable to suppose that their consciousness, when their planet went into pralaya, thus compelling them to abandon it, would resemble, if not be identical with, the devachanic consciousness, obtaining after death. This would not contra-indicate an immense store of wisdom acquired on material planes, which would be only partially available here, because of the inability of the Higher Ego to express or function upon this earth, through the slow evolutionary processes of nature not yet having wrought matter up to the requisite fineness. But having through its reflection, the Lower Manas, our ordinary selves, attained to partial self-consciousness here, it now becomes possible for it to quicken the laggard steps of nature, to widen self-consciousness upon the material plane, and to begin to transfer it to the spiritual planes where it has its own proper being. For self-consciousness is the crown, end and aim of consciousness upon any plane, material or spiritual.

There may be stores of wisdom in the monad now expressing in the mineral kingdom, but how can this be utilized intelligently until self-consciousness enables it to be specifically drawn upon? Therefore, it seems that the Re-incarnating Ego is a monadic centre of potential self-consciousness upon all the planes of nature in the Cosmos. This potentiality has become a potency upon many of these planes, some of which, as shown by its powers, must be infinitely superior to consciousness upon this earth. It now seeks cosmic perfection by the evolution or attainment of this same or perfect self-consciousness, upon all those planes yet remaining unexplored.

Being a Ray from the Absolute, emanating as it must from the Causeless Cause, lying hidden behind all manifestation, the Higher Ego possesses the creative and ideative functions involved in its own expression, or being. This creative power in the Re-incarnating Ego—creative in the sense of changing or renewing form, only—is most important to bear in mind. It must not be supposed that ordinary men consciously create—a power reached by Adeptship alone—or even that the Re-incarnating Ego

consciously creates or builds its own bodies; that again is only possible for those in whom the Higher and Lower Egos have become one. But the Re-incarnating Ego does build astral and thought forms unconsciously, under the potency of that power or force which it carries with it in its emanation from the CAUSELESS CAUSE. This creative power is the source of the Linga Shârîra, the third human principle; the latter being the Thought Form, or Astral Image, of the Higher Ego, by the creative force of the latter calling into activity, unconsciously to itself and to them, the "Lower Builders," upon its again seeking re-incarnation under the law of cyclic Karma. These Lower Builders—the same which are concerned in the production of all animal or vegetable forms, under Universal or Dhyân-Chohanic Ideation—having thus received the necessary impulse from the Higher Ego, mould around the Linga Shârîra, or Higher Manas Thought Form, the physical molecules which constitute the Sthûla Shârîra, or physical form. This impulse thus given must not be looked upon as an active supervision by the Higher Ego. It is not; else would purely physical heredity of form and feature be unaccounted for, if not impossible.

Under this pressure coming from the Higher Ego, the Builders must set to work, but this work is very greatly modified by the stamp upon the physical cells, given by the parents of the physical form, under the law of physical heredity, the lowest phase of the triple evolution. On the other hand, this physical impress is again modified, in a greater or lesser degree, by the urgent tendencies of the Higher Ego to express in certain dominant directions, under the force of skandhas or results of past incarnations. Unmodified by the Higher Ego, the physical form would represent the exact average of the sum of the parents' qualities, both physical and mental, as is seen in the almost endless continuation of identical forms in the vegetable kingdom and in the lower animal—in molluscs. Unmodified by the Lower Builders, the Higher Ego would have no real karmic hold upon the earth; and working unconsciously, as far at least as this plane is concerned, might fail entirely to construct those sense organs by which alone it can relate its consciousness to terms of matter. The physical impress given by the parents under the lower law of physical heredity, affords the opportunity required to develop the Higher Ego's functions and potencies upon this plane of consciousness, and satisfies the law of cause and effect, or Karma, which compels egos having certain characteristics to seek parents having similar ones, in order that Karma may be satisfied. Did physical heredity not modify the habitation and powers of the Re-incarnating Ego, there would be no reason why it should seek expression through one parent rather than another, and we would be forced back upon the old, unjust Christian hypothesis of the human soul having no voice in

the selection of its body. Did not the Re-incarnating Ego have the power to very greatly modify its material tenement, the faculties and mental powers of the child would represent the average of the sum of its parents at best, and the innumerable instances where these are very greatly transcended, as well as those where the account is on the debit side, would be wholly unaccounted for.

The creative power of the Higher Manas, then, acting upon sub-conscious planes, produces or creates a Linga Shârîra ; just as on the sub-conscious planes of the Lower Manas, our personal self, all the vital activities, as well as the repair of wounded or diseased tissue, goes on quite independently of our conscious supervision.

On its own planes its creative potencies are exercised consciously in the production of those higher astral forms, which the Adept uses when he abandons the physical, in his journeyings. With this higher creative faculty mankind at large are not, at present at least, concerned. But since the Higher Manas builds, or rather, causes to be built, its physical body, through creative forces thus unconsciously exercised, in what manner is it consciously, and so karmically, connected with the body ?

This calls for an examination of its creative functions on ideative or mental planes, or the reflection in matter of its true, individualizing consciousness. This reflection—perhaps refraction would be the better term —of itself is quite another process to that concerned in the formation of the Linga Shârîra, which we have been considering, and is the most important of all. The Linga Shârîra may be said to represent its purely physical expression, so to speak ; this refraction, the Lower Manas, is itself, mirrored in material thought processes. The former expresses its purely physical karma, or its physical creative force taking the lines of least resistance ; the latter connects it karmically with the thoughts and mental processes of past lives. Being, when its devachanic or subjective existence between two lives is closing, drawn to the parents presenting the greatest sum of karmic affinities, its presence, and brooding over the expanding form sets up in the physical brain of the latter a thinking principle, just as a magnet upon being brought in contact with non-magnetic iron imparts magnetism to this, without having caused the smallest change in those physical qualities which constitute it iron. And, as the evolution of the physical form, which it took ages for the " Lower Builders," or the ordinary evolutionary forces in nature to accomplish, is repeated swiftly during the first few weeks of gestation, so is the entire evolution of the Lower Manas also repeated during the first few years of the child's life. For these monadic Lower Builders only push matter up to the animal or kamic plane ; the brooding presence of the Higher Manas must impart the stimulus which brings it where it is of sufficient transparency, so to speak,

to receive and refract its image. It will be at once plain that our Lower Manas, the ordinary self, is thus a portion of the very essence of the Higher, just as the magnetism in the iron is a portion of that in the magnet. And just as the magnet may be withdrawn from its contact with the iron, leaving a portion of its magnetic qualities to slowly dissipate, so may the Higher Manas be separated entirely from its lower reflection, thus constituting a veritable "loss of the soul."

For this portion of the Higher Manas actually refracted or "incarnated" in matter is ourselves, the "I am Myself," of our earthly life. Could it remain simply a portion of the Higher, its functions and fate might be different, but this is impossible. As the pure ray of light is coloured by the colour of the glass, which transmits it until it is indistinguishable from that tint, so is the Lower Manas coloured and changed by its contact with Karma [Sensuous Desire], the chief and ruler of the earthly Quaternary. All the fierce desires, the unrest, the sensuous appetites, the "lusts of the flesh," of the latter at once seize upon it, and impart to it that curious mixture of the animal with the Divine which we name the Lower Self, or Personality. This could not occur had not the Kamic Principle in the Lower Quaternary already been evolved to a point where it is able to receive the magnetic impress of Manas and to colour this with its own qualities of sensuous passion and desire.

It must not be inferred from the above that only a portion, as it were, of the Higher Manas incarnates in the Lower Quaternary, leaving the rest to enjoy a kind of superior consciousness upon other planes. While the teaching is somewhat reserved upon this point, still there is enough given out, in the Secret Doctrine and elsewhere, to make it certain that each individuality has but one centre of consciousness, and that this can not be in full activity in two places, nor in two or more states, at the same time. While it is active upon one plane it may have a sub-consciousness on others, just as we may be reading and yet be conscious of noise about us. But this is only a sub-consciousness, not a splitting of it. Therefore, when once the Higher Manas has perfected its vehicle sufficiently to permit this, it only functions through that vehicle when this is active, for its very activity compels its use as a vehicle. In other words, our "I am myself," or individualising centre of consciousness which comes from the Higher Manas and is its distinguishing characteristic, is functioning actively only through the body when this is in the waking state, although its sub-consciousness may extend over many higher planes. When the body ceases its activity, as in sleep or death, then it can of course retire to its own proper spheres, to be dragged down from these by its karmic connection with the body when this awakens. It follows, then, that when awake and occupied by material or sensuous thoughts only, the Higher Manas is

simply paralyzed; its consciousness a potentiality only, somewhat, perhaps, like that of the lower consciousness when paralyzed by hypnotism. This is its daily crucifixion, and the true meaning of all the religious myths of crucified Saviours.

Yet, though the Higher Manas be paralyzed as to conscious functioning, it cannot be said to be wholly or even partially incarnated in the body, nor is it even ever fully conscious on this plane except when its Higher and Lower aspects have been enabled to unite, through the latter having conquered in its contest with Kama. The one-ness and yet the separateness of the Higher and Lower Manas is one of the hardest of mystic teachings to understand. It is another illustration of "the Same and the Other," of which Plato taught that the Universe was constructed. Perhaps the phenomena of an ordinary Faradic electrical battery may help us, by analogy, to a better conception. In this, the current, generated by the zinc and carbon, or other elements, in the presence of an acid or saline solution, is passed through a coil of insulated wire. Around this, in what is technically termed the helix, is coiled another wire, also completely insulated, and entirely disconnected from the first, or "primary" coil. There ought, therefore, to be no current in this latter or "secondary" coil, yet the instant the current from the chemical cell is passed through the primary coil there is set up in the secondary a greatly modified or differentiated current, known as "induced" electricity. Because there has been no actual contact between the two coils, this secondary current is thus said to have been produced by "induction"—one of those convenient terms by means of which science seems to explain so much, while really explaining nothing. To account for the appearance of a current by saying that it has been "induced" is exactly equivalent to Topsy's explanation of her origin by saying that she "spected she just growed." However, Theosophy may explain or account for this second current, as the analogy to the origin of the Lower Manas and its relation to the Higher, is very close. The presence of the Higher Manas, overshadowing the body, originates a distinct Thinking Principle in the brain of the latter, in a manner exactly similar, it seems to me, to the induced current of electricity—that is, by imparting to the latter its own essential qualities. Thus it can be at once seen, that while the Lower Manas is caused by, and is of the very essence of the Higher, it is yet distinct without being separate. Withdraw the primary current, and the induced will disappear; withdraw the Higher Manas, and the Lower perishes, the chief distinction being in the slower process in the latter case.

A closer analogy to the behaviour of the Higher and Lower Thinking Principles after death is afforded in the phenomena of transferred magnetism, referred to in the beginning of this paper. For, in the illustra-

tion given, when artificial magnetism has been imparted to non-magnetic iron, upon the withdrawal of the true magnet is seen almost identically that phenomenon which takes place upon the separation of the Higher and Lower Manas. A portion of magnetism remains in the iron, to be slowly or quickly dissipated, as the case may be; it having apparently become entangled, so to speak, in the molecules of the latter, or having, more correctly, caused a polarized arrangement among those molecules whose vibratory ratio exhibits the qualities of magnetism. So, at death, only that portion of the Lower Manas is withdrawn which is untainted by Kama. That portion coloured by Kama is left; a residue, having by virtue of its original Mânasic origin, enough still of the unconscious creative power, before referred to, to clothe itself with an astral form; thus constituting the "Kama Rûpa," which, senseless and fallen as it is, is still the "guide" of many a poor, obsessed "medium." For while having no centre of consciousness capable of feeling and functioning as such, still it is capable, again by virtue of its Mânasic origin, of having a false feeling of personality reflected into it by the Lower Manas of a "Medium." This reflection may so synthesize its fading consciousness as to enable it to connect it with its past life, and to relate the leading events of this quite accurately. Its feeling of, "I am myself," is thus an illusion of an illusion, if we may be allowed the expression, for the feeling of "I am myself," which we experience in our waking state, real as it seems, is entirely illusive, being reflected there in a similar manner by the overshadowing of the Higher Manas. It only exists because of its connection with the latter, and is added to the sum total of the experience of its parent at death as the memory of each day may be said to be added to the sum of the consciousness of our personal selves. For, having drawn what of wisdom it may, from each association with a body, the Higher Manas returns to its own state, leaving the compound of Lower Manas and Kama, which, no longer an entity, can survive only as a memory in the consciousness of the former. And as there are many days that leave little or no impress upon the consciousness of our personal selves, so there may be many lives having but small record on the tablets of the Higher Manas, while some may be forgotten altogether.

These "forgotten lives" are the most dreadful fate which may befall a personality, for they are truly "lost souls." The whole of the reflected portion of the Higher Manas has been sunk so low in Kamic desires and passions that there is no union possible after death, and the personality, strong by virtue of this robbing of the qualities of its parent, clothes itself in an astral form and becomes an active agent for evil, meanwhile descending its own arc to utter annihilation amidst indescribable suffering, of which the realisation of its impending fate is not the least.

We may now, perhaps, faintly perceive the relation between Higher Manas, the Thinker, which, with Atma and Buddhi, is the Re-incarnating Ego, and Kama Manas, its reflection in matter which is the personal self. The one is the result of the evolution through unthinkable æons of time, of individualised, spiritual consciousness; a potentially self-conscious Ray of the Great Cosmic Thinking Principle; the potency of Pure Thought in the Monadic Ray individualised. It persists throughout all minor manvantaras and pralâyas; through all obscurations or destructions of worlds or systems. Yet of itself it is not immortal. It must become one in essence with Buddhi, the Eternal KNOWER, to win eternal persistence as an individual entity, just as the Lower Manas can only survive one life by becoming one in essence with its source; by freeing itself from the attractions of Kama and returning to its parent with the tribute of its conscious experiences in matter, to add to the already stored wisdom of the latter. The other, the Lower Manas, is thus but the illusory reflection of the Higher, when this has been karmically drawn to a human animal-body by its desire and necessity for complete knowledge of the material and sensuous state of consciousness on this plane of existence. This reflection, or refraction, thus produced, wins its immortality according as it approximates towards its Divine parent or yields to the sensuous delights of Kama. And not only this, but of even more importance, since personal immortality is more the concern of many incarnations, it determines, in each life, by its thoughts and acts, the social environment, the race, the nation, the family, the intellectual trend and capacity, and the ease or difficulty, even, with which the Higher Manas can control the following life or personality; so intimate is the Karmic relation between the two. For while the Higher Manas, as compared to its reflection, is god-like in its wisdom and powers, it by no means follows that it has perfected wisdom on this plane. If it had, the necessity for repeated incarnations might be questioned. And the tendencies of our finite minds is, all the time, to take the finite view of everything; to want to complete and round out the whole scheme and plan of the Cosmos in a few years. This is the pitiful mistake which Christian theology falls into in predicating the completion of man's earthly destiny in one short life. Our Higher Manas may have spent manvantaras in other humanities developing on quite distinct lines from those which we vaingloriously imagine include all possible mental and spiritual characteristics; it may spend manvantaras to come, evolving consciousness along equally unsuspected lines.

Yet, god-like and wise as is the Higher Manas, it has, as we have thus shown, to descend life after life to overshadow, impart its own essence to, and acquire wisdom through and from the human bodies with which it is

karmically, or under the law of Cause and Effect, associated. During the waking state of these bodies it can only function through them by means of its reflection, the Lower Manas, which is thus during this time its only conscious avenue. Yet so dimmed and discoloured is the Lower Manas by the desires and passions of Kama, that the consciousness transmitted through it by the Higher Manas, may well be compared to the light from a sunbeam struggling to penetrate an opaque, densely-stained, prison window. To the prisoner within, who has never known any other light, the purity and brilliancy of the source of the dim, scarcely-discernable ray, penetrating the gloom of the cell, might well remain a matter of doubt, or even of absolute disbelief. Yet in a precisely similar manner does our Higher Ego overshadow our gross, material body, struggling to penetrate and enlighten its inner darkness; whispering to our Lower Soul in the Divine voice we recognise as conscience; prompting us to altruistic work for humanity; filling our hearts with its divine compassion; the true source of every aspiration to become purer, wiser, and more unselfish than we feel ourselves to be.

And the task of every human soul is to help in this great evolution of spiritual consciousness; to turn the strength of a purified will consciously to the aid of nature in the warfare between good and evil; between light and darkness; between Life and Death. This struggling, sinning, suffering Personality can only return to, and become one with, its divine progenitor, by freeing itself from all colouring of Kama; by the utter killing out of desire. How important, then, a correct conception and realisation of the nature, interrelations and mutual dependence, of our Higher and Lower Egos, becomes! By this knowledge, and only by it, is it possible to formulate a theory of ethics, a rule for human action, for right living and thinking, which shall explain why a man ought to strive to be pure, passionless, altruistic; to live in the spiritual portion of his nature; to yield a willing, loving obedience to the dictates of his Higher Self; to treasure each glimmering Ray from its Divine Light, even though it take the form of stern rebuke, as of a million times more value than all the gold of Ophir!

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THE EVOLUTION OF MAN.

(A Paper read before the Ishwara Theosophical Society, Minneapolis, Minn.,)

By Fellow A. E. Clover.

Does *The Secret Doctrine* teach that man evolved from the lower kingdoms? The question, has humanity, as represented by man, evolved through or from the lower kingdoms, is a question that to many minds remains unanswered. Up to, comparatively, a few years ago, we of the Occidental world were content to accept the dead letter teaching of Genesis—that man was made of the dust of the ground,—we accepted it as true without inquiry, because it had been accepted as the word of God for many generations, therefore it must be true. But within this past few years there has been a deep and earnest desire among a certain class of men, known as Scientists, who could not believe the, to them, absurd theory, that man was made like a modeller in clay would make an image. To fathom the mystery of the origin of sentient life these scientists looked for facts, and would accept nothing but facts, every fact must be proven, and working on that line they gathered together a large number of facts as their working hypothesis, upon which they built a startling "fact" that man was only an educated ape. And to prove that "fact" they produce other facts, as, for instance, the female ape nurses its young, so does woman; the ape does many things in a manlike manner, the man does many things in an apelike manner—hence man must have had his origin in the ape. But why should not the ape have had his origin in man? That side of the question I suppose they did not consider, but having decided that the ape was the origin of man, the origin of the ape must be inquired into, more facts must be produced, and after proving many facts, they found the primal origin of the ape in a jelly fish. So according to these great scientists man primarily was a jelly fish, or a protozoa, the lowest imaginable form of life, and with that "fact" they appear to rest content.

But another class of men, students they are called, who delve into old books and into the mysteries of ancient lore, they in their search for hidden knowledge found a very ancient aphorism, which runs thus, "A stone becomes a plant; a plant becomes a beast; a beast becomes a man; a man becomes a spirit; the spirit a God." Now, they say, we have discovered the origin of man, man was at one time a stone. These students

are nearer the truth than the scientists, they are nearer the teaching of Genesis, for what is dust but pulverized stone? But you may say these students only carry the origin of man farther back,—that is, when the scientist stops at the protozoa,—that is true, so to make their claim good, the aid of science is invoked, more facts must be sought. They found a fact and proved that there was a plant so like a something that had been proven to be an animal, that it was decided that this plant and this animal were the links that connected the animal to the vegetable kingdom. But more facts—deeper research—by the aid of geologists, they look for the lowest form of plant life to connect the stone with the plant, what name they have given or will give to it, I cannot say, but you may be sure that it will be a very scientific one.

The answer to the question, "Does *The Secret Doctrine* teach that man evolved from the lower kingdoms?" hinges, in my judgment, on the meaning of two words, *viz*:—Monad and Man, we will analyze them. First the Monad. Leibnitz says that a Monad is a centre of force, a mathematical point without extension except in the direction of metaphysical dimension.

H.P.B. says in *The Secret Doctrine*, v. II., p. 167, that, "The monads are not discrete principles, limited or conditioned, but rays from that one Universal Absolute Principle." This, I think, is as strong as language can express it. A monad, then, is a ray of the Absolute, and as H.P.B., in footnote vi., p. 174, says, "It is not of this world or plane, it cannot either progress or develop, or even be affected by the changes of state it passes through." If this is so, it is very evident that a monad cannot be nascent man, because man has developed, has progressed; hence, when a monad is spoken of, it cannot mean man in any sense of the word. What is meant by the word man, according to Webster, "Man is distinguished by the powers of reasoning and speech, as well as by his shape and dignified aspect."

According to *The Secret Doctrine*, Man is a compound of Spirit, soul and matter, plus the ray—or monad—from the Absolute. So also are the lower forms a compound of Spirit, soul and matter, plus the ray—or monad—from the Absolute. Then wherein lies the difference? Biologists tell us, that at a certain stage of development of the human fœtus, it is impossible to distinguish it from that of the dog, and that fact is brought forth by certain students, as previously mentioned, to advance their aphorism. It only proves that the man and dog are compounded from the same elements, both animals, but as distinct in species as the dog is from the horse, or the oak tree from a stalk of wheat, which are also a compound of the same elements. Hence, man must be something more than all of the so-called lower kingdoms.

H.P.B., in v. II., p. 259, says, that "the embryo of man has no more of the ape in it, than of any other mammal, but contains in itself the totality of the kingdoms of nature." "Man has not one drop of pithecoid blood in his veins," says *The Secret Doctrine*, v. II., p. 193. Again, v. II., p. 289, "Man was the storehouse, so to speak, of all the seeds of life for this round, vegetable and animal alike."

A French Theosophist remarks—quoted from *The Secret Doctrine*, v. II., p. 289—"As man never can be, so he never has been manifested in a shape belonging to the animal kingdom *in esse*, he never formed part of that kingdom."

M. de Quartrefages, the French naturalist—quoted from *The Secret Doctrine*, v. II., p. 56—says, "That man is a distinct kingdom."

"Theosophy has never supported the wild theories of the present Darwinists, least of all the descent of man from the ape; one has only to turn to p. 47, *Esoteric Buddhism*, fifth edition, to find there the statement that 'man belongs to a kingdom distinctly separate from the animals'." "The Occultists have never admitted, nor will they ever admit, that man was an ape in this, or in any other round, or that he ever could be one, however much he may have been ape-like."

Again, *The Secret Doctrine*, v. I., p. 190, says, "The occult doctrine has never taught, nor any adept believed, in the preposterous modern theory of the descent of man from a common ancestor with the ape."

Again it is said in *The Secret Doctrine*, v. I., p. 211, "How comes our physical body to the state of perfection it is found in now? Through millions of years of evolution, yet never through or from animals."

I think that the above quotations are enough to convince any fair-minded person that *The Secret Doctrine* most emphatically teaches that man did not evolve from the lower kingdom in this or any other round, but that man is, and always has been, a distinct and separate kingdom unto himself, an epitome of the universe.

The question then is, if man is not an educated animal, what is he? *The Secret Doctrine* teaches, with no uncertain sound, that man is a God.

"The occult philosophy teaches that the first human stock was projected by higher and semi-divine beings out of their own essences."

In *The Secret Doctrine*, v. II., p. 95, we read, "The pure Gods could only project out of themselves shadowy men, a little less ethereal and spiritual, less divine and perfect than themselves—shadows still." These pure Gods are the Dhyan Chohans—the real man—they could not give the real man a garment, so a lower Hierarchy of Celestial Beings, as we are told, v. II., p. 88, "gave us our fleshy bodies." Of course I do not expect any who believe that man evolved from the lower kingdoms to accept this teaching. How can they

believe in a multiplicity of Gods, or of Celestial Beings, they have no facts on which to base a working hypothesis. Yet one of the greatest advocates of "facts"—Mr. Huxley—in one of his latest works admits, "That there may be Beings endowed with full powers to deal with our earth and its contents, as men deal with things and events which they are strong enough to modify or control, and who are capable of being moved by appeals such as men make to one another, and there may be still higher Beings who rule over our solar system, as much higher than the ruler of our earth, as the ruler of the earth is above its inhabitants, and then again, there may be a ruler of the Universe who in comparison is as much greater than the ruler of our solar system is above man." This quotation is from memory, perhaps not letter perfect, but it is the general idea, and the idea is in full accord with *The Secret Doctrine*, for it teaches that there are many orders of Celestial Beings, each order having its special duties to perform, from the highest Archangel to the lowest elemental, each on its own plane of activity, and everything in the Universe, from the highest Dhyan Chohan to the grossest mineral atom is accompanied by the ever-present monad, the ray from the Absolute. As H.P.B. says in v. I., p. 630, "Monads are everywhere, the human soul is a monad, and every cell in the human body has its monad; as every cell in animal, vegetable, and even in the so-called inorganic bodies, each have their monads." But, as previously said, a changeless principle, a ray from the Absolute. Therefore, not man, nor could it ever become man, as has been previously shown. This word monad is a very misleading term, and we have to be very careful in its use. In v. I., p. 177, H.P.B. speaks of a mineral monad and a human monad; she says: "Physically or constitutionally the mineral monad differs, of course, from the human monad, which is neither physical, nor can its constitution be rendered by chemical symbols and elements; in short, as the spiritual monad is one, universal, boundless, and impartite, whose rays, nevertheless, form what we in our ignorance call the 'Individual monads' of men, so the mineral monad, being at the opposite point of the circle, is also one, and from it proceed the countless physical atoms, which science is beginning to regard as individualised." I think the above can be best explained by comparing the mineral monad to the primordial substance as described in *The Secret Doctrine*, v. I., page 58, "Primordial substance being the noumenon of matter." And as is said, v. I., page 246, "The monad is first shot down by the law of evolution into the lowest form of matter, the mineral." Taking this view, we have two principles, one accompanying spirit and one accompanying matter. But these two principles are one.

In *The Secret Doctrine*, v. II., p. 24, it is written: "Gods and men take rise in, and from one and the same Point, which is the one universal,

immutable, eternal and absolute unity; which becomes Primordial substance in the sphere of objectivity; and the spirit of the universe, in the sphere of metaphysics,—or the logos." H.P.B. further says that, "The unity or Parabraham manifests Mulaprakriti—that is Primordial substance, —and then as the logos, that is the spirit of the universe, which is the basis of subjective life."

So then the Unity evolves from its own essence a positive and negative power termed Spirit and Matter; the Unity is latent in both and cannot—as previously said—be affected in any manner. In *The Secret Doctrine*, v. I., p. 247, we read "That it is the blending of these two, *viz.*, Spirit and Substance, that produces the perfect man. Though one and the same thing, spirit and matter, when once they are on the plane of differentiation, begin, each of them, evolutionary progress in contrary directions, spirit falling gradually into matter, and matter ascending to a pure spiritual substance. They are two poles of the same homogeneous substance, the root principle of the Universe."

This heavenly man, in space, is known as the Dhyan Chohan, and as stated in *The Secret Doctrine*, v. II., p. 242, "That the heavenly rupa (Dhyan Chohan) creates man in his own form, that form is the ideal shadow of Itself, and this is the man of the first race;" and it further says "after the earth had been made ready by the lower and more material powers, and its three kingdoms fairly started, the higher powers, the Dhyan Chohans, were compelled by evolutionary law to descend on earth, in order to construct the Crown of its evolution—Man."

Again in v. II., p. 246, we read, "Hence tradition shows the Celestial Yogis, Dhyan Chohans, offering themselves as voluntary victims in order to redeem humanity, created God-like and perfect at first, and to endow him with human affections and aspirations."

Again in v. I., p. 478, "The Archaic Stanzas describe minutely, man's primal evolution from the human Dhyan Chohan." On p. 282, v. I., *The Secret Doctrine*, H.P.B. says, "Neither the form of man, nor that of any animal, plant or stone, has ever been created, and it is only on this plane of ours that it commenced 'becoming', that is objectivising into its present materiality, therefore our human forms have existed in the eternity as astral or ethereal prototypes; according to which models the spiritual Beings, whose duty it was to bring them into objective being and terrestrial life, evolved the protoplasmic form of the future Egos from their own essences. After which when this human base mould was ready, the natural terrestrial forces began to work on those supersensuous moulds which contained, besides their own, the elements of all the past vegetable and future animal forms of this globe in them. Therefore, man's outward shell passed through every vegetable and animal body before it assumed

the human shape." Then we learn from *Isis Unveiled*, "It is positively absurd to believe the 'transformation of species' to have taken place according to some of the more materialistic views of the evolutionists, it is but natural to think that each genus, beginning with the molluscs and ending with man, had modified its own primordial and distinctive forms."

Again, Agassiz declares his belief in an indefinite number of primordial races of men, created separately. Whilst in every zoological province animals are of different species, man, in spite of the diversity of his races, always forms one and the same human being" (quoted from *The Secret Doctrine*, v. II. p. 610). Now, if this means anything, it means this, that the forms which now exist, have existed in the eternity as astral or ethereal prototypes, and that they have evolved and objectivized on their own lines.

The Secret Doctrine, in v. I., p. 636, says: "No occultist would deny that man—no less than the elephant and the microbe, the crocodile and the lizard, the blade of grass or the crystal—is, in his physical formation, the simple product of the evolutionary forces of Nature through a numberless series of transformations." And then on p. 262, v. II.: "The form means nothing, species and genera of the flora, fauna, and the highest animal—its crown, man—change and vary according to the environments and climate variations, not with every round, but with every root race likewise."

Again, v. II., p. 168, we find that, "*The Secret Doctrine* claims for man a polygenetic origin; that the evolution of animal follows that of man, instead of preceding it. And this is diametrically opposed to the now generally accepted theories of evolution, and the descent of man from an animal ancestor."

Then on p. 81, v. II., it is taught, "That between man and the animal, there is the impassable abyss of mentality and self-consciousness. Can man, a God in the animal form, be the product of material nature by evolution alone, and what is it that creates such difference unless man is an animal, plus a living God within his physical shell."

Again, v. II., p. 177, states that "the evolution of man is analogous to that of the universe; his—man's—evolution stands between that of the universe and that of the animal. This clearly shows that man has evolved on different lines."

Then on p. 290, v. II., we read, "The human form so-called, because it is the vehicle—under whatever shape—of the divine man. A new human form must always have been the new type of the cycle. The human shape in one round becomes cast-off clothes in the next, which in turn is appropriated by the highest order in the kingdom below."

We further read that "having appeared at the very beginning at the head of sentient and conscious life, man (the astral or the soul) became the living and animal unit, from which the cast-off clothes determined the shape of every life and animal in this round."

Then on p. 146 v. II., it is said, "That the humanity of the first manvantara or round, is that of the seventh, and all intermediate ones." This is very clear, how could there be humanity in the first round if there were no man?

In footnote p. 222, v. I., *The Secret Doctrine* says "That the sixfold Dhyan Chohans are in fact men, minus the physical body." And then on p. 230, v. I., "That which is a surviving entity in us is partly the direct emanation from, and partly those celestial entities themselves." Then on v. I., p. 489, "That monads are the material out of which the Gods clothe themselves in bodies."

Again in v. I., p. 455, "In round one the animal atoms are drawn into a cohesion of human physical form to clothe the hierarchy of being in primary creation—so animal creation has to precede divine man on earth." Then in v. I., p. 213, "This same hierarchy of beings merges into the human, and creates—midway in its descent into matter—the visible universe."

Again in v. I., p. 219, we read: "That the physical, according to esoteric teachings, evolves gradually from the spiritual, mental, and psychic." Then in v. I., p. 231, "That every round on a descending scale is but a repetition in a more concrete form of the round which preceded it."

Thus it becomes clear, that the origin of man on this our present round, must occupy the same place, in the same order, as in the preceding round. And it must be remembered that each round is under the supervision of the Dhyan Chohans.

It is stated, *The Secret Doctrine*, p. 450, v. I., "that man proceeds from the Dhyan Chohans, and is a God in exile;" and on p. 452, "that the Dhyan Chohans are the collective aggregate of Divine intelligence or primordial mind, and that the first Manus—the seven 'mind born' Spiritual Intelligences—are identical with the former."

Then on p. 151, v. II., "Every unprejudiced person would prefer to believe that primeval humanity had at first an ethereal form evolved by Gods, or natural 'forces' which grew, condensed throughout millions of ages, than to believe that he came from an unknown anthropoid ancestor." Then on p. 186, v. II., "Therefore, the Kabalists say correctly that 'Man becomes a stone, a plant, an animal, a man, a spirit, and finally God. Thus accomplishing his cycle or circuit and returning to the point from which he had started as the heavenly Man.'

But by 'Man' the Divine Monad is meant, and not the thinking entity, much less his physical body."

Again in v. I., p. 159, we learn "That humanity develops fully only in the fourth round; up to this fourth life cycle, it is referred to as 'humanity' only for lack of a more appropriate term. Man, or rather that which becomes man, passes through all the forms and kingdoms during the first round, and through all the human shapes during the two following rounds."

This passing through the lower kingdoms you will better understand if you remember what I have previously said, *viz.*, that the Dhyan Chohan, being spirit, could not manifest, except through its opposite matter. So to materialize form it clothed itself with the material at hand, but the form was the form of a God, not of a lower kingdom. As has been said, our human forms have existed in the eternity as astral.

But you may ask, what is this material, of which this mineral kingdom is composed, this matter that the first humanity must pass through, so as to assimilate and acquire experience, as is thought by some, and is so frequently quoted. *The Secret Doctrine* says, on p. 13, v. I., that it is Akasa. But what is Akasa—light—nothing but light. This could not have been a very gross matter, but still darkness to the pure spirit, man was. So the first round humanity were clothed with light. A foot-note says, "Akasa is, cosmically, a radiant, cool, plastic matter, creative in its physical nature, immutable in its higher principles." From this it can be seen what is meant by "The Breath of the Father-Mother issues cold and radiant, and gets hot and corrupt, to cool once more" (quoted from *The Secret Doctrine*, vol. I., p. 144).

And on p. 252, footnote, "The Globe was fiery, cool and radiant as its ethereal *men* and animals during the *first* round, says the commentary." And in v. I., p. 259, it says, "Thus in the first round, the globe, having been built by the primitive fire lives—that is, formed into a sphere—had no solidity, nor form, nor colour, it was only towards the end of the first round that it developed one element." She also says, in footnote, "The primordial substance, if matter at all, is that which is called light—esoterically explained, is the body of those spirits themselves, and their very essence." I cannot help quoting in this connection from the *Zohar*, as quoted in *The Secret Doctrine*, v. I., p. 356, footnote, "Says Rabbi Simeon, 'Ah, companions, companions, Man as an emanation, was both man and woman, as well on the side of the Father—that is spirit or Dhyan Chohan—as on the side of the Mother—that is matter or primordial substance: and this is the sense of the words, and Elohim spoke let there be light, and it was light." This is a very graphic description from the old Quabbalist, showing that this thought was common to Initiates of all lands.

There is another old book that does not teach that man evolved from the lower kingdom, that is Genesis, which, if read esoterically, is in full accord with *The Secret Doctrine*; for, you remember, "God said let there be light, and there was light."

First there was darkness (that is the pure ray of the Absolute). "The Spirit of God" (that is the Dhyan Chohan) "moved upon the face of the waters" (that is primordial substance) producing light. And remember He made man—not of the dust of the ground, as He does in the second chapter—but "in His own Image." It is not my purpose to-night to enter any deeper into the esotericism of Genesis, but to call your attention to the great truth underlying the allegory.

To sum up the term, "monad" is a misleading term, for it is shown to be an abstract principle—"array"—that changes not," consequently can never become man. And second, man is a God, fallen, it is true, from his first estate, but through æons of purifying fire he will return from whence he came—to Spirit—while the so-called lower kingdoms will return to the primordial substance, and ultimately unite with Spirit and the monadic ray of the one Unity.

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AN ESSAY ON THE BEAUTIFUL.

(From the Greek of Plotinus.)

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PREFACE.

THE present issue of THEOSOPHICAL SIFTINGS is a reprint of an exceedingly rare little volume, published in London in the year 1792. The translator was Thomas Taylor, the famous Platonist, and it is one of the most difficult of his works to procure.

Of Plotinus, the author of the treatise "On the Beautiful," here translated, *The Theosophical Glossary* says that he was the noblest, highest, and grandest of all the Neo-Platonists after the founder of the school, Ammonius Saccas. He was the most enthusiastic of the *Philalethians* or "lovers of truth," whose aim was to found a religion on a system of intellectual abstraction, which is true Theosophy, or the whole substance of Neo-Platonism.

If we are to believe Porphyry, Plotinus has never disclosed either his birthplace or connexions, his native land or his race. Till the age of twenty-eight he had never found teacher or teaching which would suit him or answer his aspirations. Then he happened to hear Ammonius Saccas, from which day he continued to attend his school. At thirty-nine, he accompanied the Emperor Gordian to Persia and India, with the object of learning their philosophy. He died at the age of sixty-six, after writing fifty-four books on philosophy. He reached Samâdhi (highest ecstasy or "re-union with God," the divine Ego) several times during his life, as said by a biographer. "So far did his contempt for his bodily organs go, that he refused to use a remedy, regarding it as unworthy of a man to use means of this kind."

Again we read: "As he died, a dragon (or serpent) that had been under his bed, glided through a hole in the wall and disappeared"—a fact suggestive for the student of symbolism.

He taught a doctrine identical with that of the Vedantins, namely, that the Spirit-Soul emanating from the One deific principle, was, after its pilgrimage, re-united to It.

ED. T.P.S.

AN ESSAY ON THE BEAUTIFUL.

(From the Greek of Plotinus.)

INTRODUCTION.

It may seem wonderful that language, which is the only method of conveying our conceptions, should, at the same time, be an hindrance to our advancement in philosophy; but the wonder ceases when we consider, that it is seldom studied as the vehicle of truth, but is too frequently esteemed for its own sake, independent of its connection with things. This observation is remarkably verified in the Greek language; which, as it is the only repository of ancient wisdom, has, unfortunately for us, been the means of concealing, in shameful obscurity, the most profound researches and the sublimest truths. That words, indeed, are not otherwise valuable than as subservient to things, must surely be acknowledged by every liberal mind, and will alone be disputed by him who has spent the prime of his life, and consumed the vigour of his understanding, in verbal criticisms and grammatical trifles. And, if this is the case, every lover of truth will only study a language for the purpose of procuring the wisdom it contains; and will doubtless wish to make his native language the vehicle of it to others. For, since all truth is eternal, its nature can never be altered by transposition, though by this means its dress may be varied, and become less elegant and refined. Perhaps even this inconvenience may be remedied by sedulous cultivation; at least, the particular inability of some, ought not to discourage the well-meant endeavours of others. Whoever reads the lives of the ancient Heroes of Philosophy, must be convinced that they studied things more than words, and that Truth alone was the ultimate object of their search; and he who wishes to emulate their glory and participate their wisdom, will study their doctrines more than their language, and value the depth of their understandings far beyond the elegance of their composition. The native charms of Truth will ever be sufficient to allure the truly philosophic mind; and he who has once discovered her retreats will surely endeavour to fix a mark by which they may be detected by others.

But, though the mischief arising from the study of words is prodigious, we must not consider it as the only cause of darkening the splendours of Truth, and obstructing the free diffusion of her light. Different manners and philosophies have equally contributed to banish the goddess from our realms, and to render our eyes offended with her celestial light. Hence we must not

wonder that, being indignant at the change, and perceiving the empire of ignorance rising to unbounded dominion, she has retired from the spreading darkness, and concealed herself in the tranquil and divinely lucid regions of mind. For we need but barely survey modern pursuits to be convinced how little they are connected with wisdom. Since, to describe the nature of some particular place, the form, situation and magnitude of a certain city; to trace the windings of a river to its source, or delineate the aspect of a pleasant mountain; to calculate the fineness of the silkworm's threads, and arrange the gaudy colours of butterflies; in short, to pursue matter through its infinite divisions, and wander in its dark labyrinths, is the employment of the philosophy in vogue. But surely the energies of intellect are more worthy our concern than the operations of sense; and the science of universals, permanent and fixed, must be superior to the knowledge of particulars, fleeting and frail. Where is a sensible object to be found, which abides for a moment the same; which is not either rising to perfection, or verging to decay; which is not mixed and confused with its contrary; whose flowing nature no resistance can stop, nor any art confine? Where is the chemist who, by the most accurate analyzation can arrive at the principles of bodies; or who, though he might be so lucky in his search as to detect the atoms of Democritus, could by this means give respite to mental investigation? For every atom, since endued with figure, must consist of parts, though indissolubly cemented together; and the immediate cause of this cement must be something incorporeal or knowledge can have no stability and enquiry no end. Where, says Mr. Harris, is the microscope which can discern what is smallest in nature? Where the telescope which can see at what point in the universe wisdom first began? Since, then, there is no portion of matter which may not be the subject of experiments without end, let us betake ourselves to the regions of mind, where all things are bounded in intellectual measure; where everything is permanent and beautiful, eternal and divine. Let us quit the study of particulars, for that which is general and comprehensive, and through this, learn to see and recognize whatever exists.

With a view to this desirable end, I have presented the reader with a specimen of that sublime wisdom which first arose in the colleges of the Egyptian priests, and flourished afterwards in Greece; which was there cultivated by Pythagoras, under the mysterious veil of numbers; by Plato, in the graceful dress of poetry; and was systematized by Aristotle, as far as it could be reduced into scientific order; which, after becoming in a manner extinct, shone again with its pristine splendour among the philosophers of the Alexandrian school; was learnedly illustrated with Asiatic luxuriancy of style by Proclus; was divinely explained by Iamblichus: and profoundly delivered in the writings of Plotinus. Indeed, the works of

this last philosopher are particularly valuable to all who desire to penetrate into the depths of this divine wisdom. From the exalted nature of his genius, he was called Intellect by his contemporaries, and is said to have composed his books under the influence of divine illumination. Porphyry relates, in his life, that he was four times united by an ineffable energy with the divinity; which, however such an account may be ridiculed in the present age, will be credited by everyone who has properly explored the profundity of his mind. The facility and vehemence of his composition was such, that when he had once conceived a subject, he wrote as from an internal pattern, without paying much attention to the orthography, or reviewing what he had written; for the celestial vigour of his intellect rendered him incapable of trifling concerns, and in this respect, inferior to common understandings, as the eagle, which in its bold flight pierces the clouds, skims the surface of the earth with less rapidity than the swallow. Indeed a minute attention to trifles is inconsistent with great genius of every kind, and it is on this account that retirement is so absolutely necessary to the discovery of truths of the first dignity and importance; for how is it possible to mix much with the world, without imbibing the false and puerile conceptions of the multitude; and without losing that true elevation of soul which comparatively despises every mortal concern? Plotinus, therefore, conscious of the incorrectness of his writings arising from the rapidity, exuberance and daring sublimity of his thoughts, committed their revision to his disciple Porphyry; who, though inferior in depth of thought to his master, was, on account of his extraordinary abilities, called by way of eminence the Philosopher.

The design of the following discourse is to bring us to the perception of the beautiful itself, even while connected with a corporeal nature, which must be the great end of all true philosophy and which Plotinus happily obtained. To a genius, indeed, truly modern, with whom the crucible and the air-pump are alone the standards of Truth, such an attempt must appear ridiculous in the extreme. With these, nothing is real but what the hand can grasp or the corporeal eye perceives, and nothing useful but what pampers the appetite or fills the purse; but unfortunately, their perceptions, like Homer's frail dreams, pass through the ivory gate; and are consequently empty and fallacious, and contain nothing belonging to the vigilant soul. To such as these a treatise on the beautiful cannot be addressed; since its object is too exalted to be approached by those engaged in the impurities of sense, and too bright to be seen by the eye accustomed to the obscurity of corporeal vision. But it is alone proper to him who is sensible that his soul is strongly marked with ruin by its union with body; who considers himself in the language of Empedocles, as

"Heaven's exile, straying from the orb of light;"

and who so ardently longs for a return to his true country, that to him, as to Ulysses when fighting for Ithaca,

> "Slow seems the fun to move, the hours to roll;
> His native home deep-imag'd in his soul."*

But here it is requisite to observe that our ascent to this region of Beauty must be made by gradual advances, for, from our association with matter, it is impossible to pass directly, and without a medium, to such transcendent perfection; but we must proceed in a manner similar to those who pass from darkness to the brightest light, by advancing from places moderately enlightened, to such as are the most luminous of all. It is necessary therefore, that we should become very familiar with the most abstract contemplations; and that our intellectual eye should be strongly irradiated with the light of ideas which precedes the splendours of the beautiful itself, like the brightness which is seen on the summit of mountains previous to the rising of the sun. Nor ought it to seem strange, if it should be some time before even the liberal soul can recognize the beautiful progeny of intellect as its kindred and allies; for, from its union with body, it has drunk deep of the cup of oblivion, and all its energetic powers are stupefied by the intoxicating draught; so that the intelligible world, on its first appearance, is utterly unknown by us, and our recollection of its inhabitants entirely lost; and we become familiar to Ulysses on his first entrance into Ithaca, of whom Homer says,

> "Yet had his mind, thro' tedious absence lost
> The dear remembrance of his native coast."†

For,

> "Now all the land another prospect bore
> Another port appeared, another shore,
> And long continued ways, and winding floods
> And unknown mountains crowned with unknown woods:"

until the goddess of wisdom purges our eyes from the mists of sense and says to each of us, as she did to Ulysses,

> "Now lift thy longing eyes, while I restore
> The pleasing prospect of thy native shore."

For then will

> ". . . . . the prospect clear,
> The mists disperse, and all the coast appear."

Let us then, humbly supplicate the irradiations of wisdom, and follow Plotinus as our divine guide to the beatific vision of the Beautiful itself; for in this alone can we find perfect repose, and repair those destructive clefts

* Pope's Homer's *Odyssey*, Book xiii., ver. 37.

† *Odyssey*, Book xiii., ver. 223.

and chinks of the soul which its departure from the light of good, and its lapse into a corporeal nature, have introduced.

But before I conclude, I think it necessary to caution the reader not to mix any modern enthusiastic opinions with the doctrines contained in the following discourse; for there is not a greater difference between substance and shade than between ancient and modern enthusiasm. The object of the former was the highest good and the supreme beauty; but that of the latter is nothing more than a phantom raised by bewildered imaginations, floating on the unstable ocean of opinion, the sport of the waves of prejudice and blown about by the breath of factious party. Like substance and shade, indeed they possess a similitude in outward appearance, but in reality they are perfect contraries; for the one fills the mind with solid and durable good, but the other with empty delusions; which like the ever running waters of the Danaïdes, glide away as fast as they enter, and leave nothing behind but the ruinous passages through which they flowed.

I only add, that the ensuing treatise is designed as a specimen (if it should meet with encouragement) of my intended mode of publishing all the works of Plotinus. The undertaking is, I am sensible, arduous in the extreme; and the disciples of wisdom are unfortunately few; but, as I desire no other reward of my labour, than to have the expense of printing defrayed, and to see Truth propagated in my native tongue; I hope those few will enable me to obtain the completion of my desires.

For then, to adopt the words of Ulysses,

* That view vouchsaf'd, let instant death surprise
With ever-during shade these happy eyes!

CONCERNING THE BEAUTIFUL.

Beauty† for the most part, consists in objects of sight; but it is also received through the ears, by the skilful composition of words, and the consonant proportion of sounds; for in every species of harmony, beauty is to be found. And if we rise from sense into the regions of soul, we shall

* *Odyssey*, Book vii., ver. 303.

† It is necessary to inform the Platonical reader, that the Beautiful, in the present discourse, is considered according to its most general acceptation, as the same with the Good: though, according to a more accurate distinction, as Plotinus himself informs us, the Good is considered as the fountain and principle of the Beautiful. I think it likewise proper to observe, that as I have endeavoured, by my paraphrase, to render as much as possible the obscure parts evident, and to expand those sentences which are so very much contracted in the original, I shall be sparing of notes; for my design is not to accommodate the sublimest truths to the meanest understandings, (as this would be a contemptible and useless prostitution) but to render them perspicuous to truly liberal and philosophic minds. My reasons for adopting this mode of paraphrase, may be seen in the preface to my translation of *Orpheus's Hymns*.

T. Taylor

there perceive studies and offices, actions and habits, sciences and virtues, invested with a much larger portion of beauty. But whether there is above these, a still higher beauty, will appear as we advance in its investigation. What is it then, which causes bodies to appear fair to the sight, sounds beautiful to the ear, and science and virtue lovely to the mind? May we not enquire after what manner they all partake of beauty? Whether beauty is one and the same in all? Or, whether the beauty of bodies is of one kind, and the beauty of souls of another? And again, what these are, if they are two? Or, what beauty is, if perfectly simple, and one? For some things, as bodies, are doubtless beautiful, not from the natures of the subjects in which they reside, but rather by some kind of participation: but others again appear to be essentially beautiful, or beauties themselves; and such is the nature of virtue. For, with respect to the same bodies, they appear beautiful to one person, and the reverse of beauty to another; as if the essence of body were a thing different from the essence of beauty. In the first place then, what is that, which, by its presence, causes the beauty of bodies? Let us reflect, what most powerfully attracts the eyes of beholders, and seizes the spectator with rapturous delight; for if we can find what this is, we may perhaps use it as a ladder, enabling us to ascend into the region of beauty, and survey its immeasurable extent.

It is the general opinion that a certain commensuration of parts to each other, and to the whole, with the addition of colour, generates that beauty which is the object of sight; and that in the commensurate and the moderate alone the beauty of everything consists. But from such an opinion the compound only, and not the simple, can be beautiful, the single parts will have no peculiar beauty; and will only merit that appellation by conferring to the beauty of the whole. But it is surely necessary that a lovely whole should consist of beautiful parts, for the fair can never rise out of the deformed. But from such a definition, it follows, that beautiful colours and the light of the sun, since they are simple and do not receive their beauty from commensuration, must be excluded the regions of beauty. Besides, how, from such an hypothesis, can gold be beautiful? Or the glittering of night and the glorious spectacle of the stars? In like manner, the most simple musical sounds will be foreign from beauty, though in a song wholly beautiful every note must be beautiful, as necessary to the being of the whole. Again, since the same proportion remaining, the same face is to one person beautiful and to another the reverse, is it not necessary to call the beauty of the commensurate one kind of beauty and the commensuration another kind, and that the commensurate is fair by means of something else? But if transferring themselves to beautiful studies and fair discourses, they shall assign

as the cause of beauty in these the proportion of measure, what is that which in beautiful sciences, laws or disciplines, is called commensurate proportion? Or in what manner can speculations themselves be called mutually commensurate? If it be said because of the inherent concord, we reply that there is a certain concord and consent in evil souls, a conformity of sentiment, in believing (as it is said) that temperance is folly and justice generous ignorance. It appears, therefore, that the beauty of the soul is every virtue, and this species of the beautiful possesses far greater reality than any of the superior we have mentioned. But after what manner in this is commensuration to be found? For it is neither like the symmetry in magnitude nor in numbers. And since the parts of the soul are many, in what proportion and synthesis, in what temperament of parts or concord of speculations, does beauty consist? Lastly, of what kind is the beauty of intellect itself, abstracted from every corporeal concern, and intimately conversing with itself alone?

We still, therefore, repeat the question, What is the beauty of bodies? It is something which at first view presents itself to sense, and which the soul familiarly apprehends and eagerly embraces, as if it were allied to itself. But when it meets with the deformed, it hastily starts from the view and retires abhorrent from its discordant nature. For since the soul in its proper state ranks according to the most excellent essence in the order of things, when it perceives any object related to itself, or the mere vestige of a relation, it congratulates itself on the pleasing event, and astonished with the striking resemblance *enters deep into its essence, and, by rousing its dormant powers, at length perfectly recollects its kindred and allies. What is the similitude then between the beauties of sense and that beauty which is divine? For if there be any similitude the respective objects must be similar. But after what manner are the two beautiful? For it is by participation of species that we call every sensible object beautiful. Thus, since everything void of form is by

* "Enters deep into its essence," etc. The Platonic Philosophy insists much on the necessity of retiring into ourselves in order to the discovery of truth; and on this account Socrates, in the first *Alcibiades*, says that the soul entering into herself will contemplate whatever exists and the divinity himself. Upon which Proclus thus comments, with his usual elegance and depth (in *Theol. Plat.*, p. 7): "For the soul," says he, "contracting herself wholly into a union with herself, and into the centre of universal life, and removing the multitude and variety of all-various powers, ascends into the highest place of speculation, from whence she will survey the nature of beings. For if she looks back upon things posterior to her essence, she will perceive nothing but the shadows and resemblances of beings; but if she returns into herself she will evolve her own essence, and the reasons she contains. And at first indeed she will, as it were, only behold herself; but when by her knowledge she penetrates more profoundly in her investigations she will find intellect seated in her essence and the universal orders of beings; but when she advances into the more interior recesses of herself, and as it were into the sanctuary of the soul, she will be enabled to contemplate, with her eyes closed to corporeal vision, the genus of the gods and the unities of beings. For all things reside in us, after a manner correspondent to the nature of the soul; and on this account we are naturally enabled to know all things, by exciting our inherent powers and images of whatever exists."

nature fitted for its reception, as far as it is destitute of reason and form it is base and separate from the divine reason, the great fountain of forms; and whatever is entirely remote from this immortal source is perfectly base and deformed.* And such is matter, which by its nature is ever averse from the supervening irradiations of form. Whenever, therefore, form accedes, it conciliates in amicable unity the parts which are about to compose a whole; for being itself one it is not wonderful that the subject of its power should tend to unity, as far as the nature of a compound will admit. Hence beauty is established in multitude when the many is reduced into one, and in this case it communicates itself both to the parts and to the whole. But when a particular one, composed from similar parts, is received it gives itself to the whole, without departing from the sameness and integrity of its nature. Thus at one and the same time it communicates itself to the whole building and its several parts; and at another time confines itself to a single stone, and then the first participation arises from the operations of art, but the second from the formation of nature. And hence body becomes beautiful through the communion supernally proceeding from divinity.

But the soul, by her innate power, than which nothing more powerful, in judging its proper concerns, when another soul concurs in the decision, acknowledges the beauty of forms. And, perhaps, its knowledge in this case arises from its accommodating its internal ray of beauty to form, and trusting to this in its judgment; in the same manner as a rule is employed

* "And such is matter," etc. There is nothing affords more wonderful speculation than matter, which ranks as the last among the universality of things, and has the same relation to being as shade to substance. For, as in an ascending series of causes it is necessary to arrive at something, which is the first cause of all, and to which no perfection is wanting; so in a descending series of subjects, it is equally necessary we should stop at some general subject, the lowest in the order of things, and to which every perfection of being is denied. But let us hear the profound and admirable description which Plotinus gives us of matter (lib. vi, *Ennead* 3), and of which the following is a paraphrase: "Since matter," says he, "is neither soul, nor intellect, nor life, nor form, nor reason, nor bound, but a certain indefiniteness; nor yet capacity, for what can it produce? Since it is foreign from all these, it cannot merit the appellation of being, but is deservedly called non-entity. Nor yet is it non-entity in the manner as motion or station; but it is true non-entity, the mere shadow and imagination of bulk and the desire of subsistence; abiding without station, of itself invisible, and avoiding the desire of him who wishes to perceive its nature. Hence, when no one perceives it, it is then in a manner present, but cannot be viewed by him who strives intently to behold it. Again, in itself contraries always appear, the small and the great, the less and the more, deficience and excess. So that it is a phantom, neither abiding nor yet able to fly away; capable of no one denomination and possessing no power from intellect, but constituted in the defect and shade, as it were, of all real being. Hence, too, in each of its vanishing appellations it eludes our search; for if we think of it as something great, it is in the meantime small; if as something more, it becomes less; and the apparent being which we meet with in its image is non-being, and as it were a flying mockery. So that the forms which appear in matter are merely ludicrous, shadows falling upon shadow, as in a mirror, where the position of a thing is different from its real situation; and which, though apparently full of forms, possesses nothing real and true but imitations of being and semblances flowing about a formless semblance. They appear, indeed, to affect something in the subject matter, but in reality produce nothing: from their debile and flowing nature being endued with no solidity and no rebounding power. And since matter, likewise, has no solidity they penetrate it without division, like images in water, or as if anyone should fill a vacuum with forms."

in the decision of what is straight. But how can that which is inherent in body, accord with that which is above body? Let us reply by asking how the architect pronounces the building beautiful by accommodating the external structure to the fabric of his soul? Perhaps, because the outward building, when entirely deprived of the stones, is no other than the intrinsic form, divided by the external mass of matter, but indivisibly existing, though appearing in the many. When, therefore, sense beholds the form in bodies, at strife with matter, binding and vanquishing its contrary nature, and sees form gracefully shining forth in other forms, it collects together the scattered whole, and introduces it to itself, and to the indivisible form within; and renders it consonant, congruous and friendly to its own intimate form. Thus, to the good man, virtue shining forth in youth is lovely because consonant to the true virtue which lies deep in the soul. But the simple beauty of colour arises, when light, which is something incorporeal, and reason and form entering the obscure involutions of matter, irradiates and forms its dark and formless nature. It is on this account that fire surpasses other bodies in beauty, because, compared with the other elements, it obtains the order of form; for it is more eminent than the rest, and is the most subtle of all, bordering, as it were, on an incorporeal nature. And too, that though impervious itself it is intimately received by others, for it imparts heat, but admits no cold. Hence it is the first nature which is ornamented with colour, and is the source of it to others; and on this account it beams forth exalted like some immaterial form. But when it cannot vanquish its subject, as participating but a slender light, it is no longer beautiful, because it does not receive the whole form of colour. Again, the music of the voice rouses the harmony latent in the soul, and opens her eye to the perception of beauty, existing in many the same. But it is the property of the harmony perceived by sense, to be measured by numbers, yet not in every proportion of number or voice; but in that alone which is obedient to the production, and conquest of its species. And this much for the beauties of sense, which, like images and shadows flowing into matter, adorn with spectacles of beauty its formless being, and strike the respective senses with wonder and delight.

But it is now time, leaving every object of sense far behind, to contemplate, by a certain ascent, a beauty of a much higher order; a beauty not visible to the corporeal eye, but alone manifest to the brighter eye of the soul, independent of all corporeal aid. However, since, without some previous perception of beauty it is impossible to express by words the beauties of sense, but we must remain in the state of the blind, so neither can we ever speak of the beauty of offices and sciences, and whatever is allied to these, if deprived of their intimate possession. Thus we shall never be able to tell of virtue's brightness, unless by looking inward we

perceive the fair countenance of justice and temperance, and are convinced that neither the evening nor morning star are half so beautiful and bright. But it is requisite to perceive objects of this kind by that eye by which the soul beholds such real beauties. Besides it is necessary that whoever perceives this species of beauty, should be seized with much greater delight, and more vehement admiration, than any corporeal beauty can excite; as now embracing beauty real and substantial. Such affections, I say, ought to be excited about true beauty, as admiration and sweet astonishment; desire also and love and a pleasant trepidation. For all souls, as I may say, are affected in this manner about invisible objects, but those the most who have the strongest propensity to their love; as it likewise happens about corporeal beauty; for all equally perceive beautiful corporeal forms, yet all are not equally excited, but lovers in the greatest degree.

But it may be allowable to interrogate those, who rise above sense, concerning the effects of love in this manner; of such we enquire, what do you suffer respecting fair studies, and beautiful manners, virtuous works, affections, and habits, and the beauty of souls? What do you experience on perceiving yourselves lovely within? After what manner are you roused as it were to a Bacchalian fury; striving to converse with yourselves, and collecting yourselves separate from the impediments of body? For thus are true lovers enraptured. But what is the cause of these wonderful effects. It is neither figure, nor colour, nor magnitude; but soul herself, fair through temperance, and not with the false gloss of colour, and bright with the splendours of virtue herself. And this you experience as often as you turn your eye inwards; or contemplate the amplitude of another soul; the just manners, the pure temperance; fortitude venerable by her noble countenance; and modesty and honesty walking with an intrepid step, and a tranquil and steady aspect; and what crowns the beauty of them all, constantly receiving the irradiations of a divine intellect.

In what respect then, shall we call these beautiful? For they are such as they appear, nor did ever any one behold them, and not pronounce them realities. But as yet reason desires to know how they cause the loveliness of the soul; and what that grace is in every virtue which beams forth to view like light? Are you then willing we should assume the contrary part, and consider what in the soul appears deformed? for perhaps it will facilitate our search, if we can thus find what is base in the soul, and from whence its derives its original.

Let us suppose a soul deformed, to be one intemperate and unjust, filled with a multitude of desires, a prey to foolish hopes and vexed with idle fears; through its diminutive and avaricious nature the subject of envy; employed solely in thought of what is immoral and low,

bound in the fetters of impure delights living the life, whatever it may be, peculiar to the passion of body; and so totally merged in sensuality as to esteem the base pleasant, and the deformed beautiful and fair. But may we not say, that this baseness approaches the soul as an adventitious evil, under the pretext of adventitious beauty; which, with great detriment, renders it impure, and pollutes it with much depravity; so that it neither possesses true life, nor true sense, but is endued with a slender life through its mixture of evil, and this worn out by the continual depredations of death; no longer perceiving the objects of mental vision, nor permitted any more to dwell with itself, because ever hurried away to things obscure, external and low? Hence, becoming impure, and being on all sides snatched in the unceasing whirl of sensible forms, it is covered with corporeal stains, and wholly given to matter, contracts deeply its nature, loses all its original splendour, and almost changes its own species into that of another; just as the pristine beauty of the most lovely form would be destroyed by its total immersion in mire and clay. But the deformity of the first arises from inward filth, of its own contracting; of the second, from the accession of some foreign nature. If such a one then desires to recover his former beauty, it is necessary to cleanse the infected parts, and thus by a thorough purgation to resume his original form. Hence, then if we assert that the soul, by her mixture, confusion and commerce with body and matter, becomes thus base, our assertion will, I think, be right. For the baseness of the soul consists in not being pure and sincere. And as the gold is deformed by the adherence of earthly clods, which are no sooner removed than on a sudden the gold shines forth with its native purity; and then becomes beautiful when separated from natures foreign from its own, and when it is content with its own purity for the possession of beauty; so the soul, when separated from the sordid desires engendered by its too great immersion in body, and liberated from the dominion of every perturbation, can thus and thus only, blot out the base stains imbibed from its union with body; and thus becoming alone, will doubtless expel all the turpitude contracted from a nature so opposite to its own.

Indeed, as the ancient oracle declares, temperance and fortitude, prudence and every virtue, are certain purgatives of the soul; and hence the sacred mysteries prophesy obscurely, yet with truth, that the soul not purified lies in Tartarus, immersed in filth. Since the impure is, from his depravity, the friend of filth, as swine, from their sordid body, delight in mire alone.

For what else is true temperance than not to indulge in corporeal delights, but to fly from their connection, as things which are neither pure, nor the offspring of purity? And true fortitude is not to fear death; for

death is nothing more than a certain separation of soul from body, and this he will not fear, who desires to be alone. Again, magnanimity is the contempt of every mortal concern; it is the wing by which we fly into the regions of intellect. And lastly, prudence is no other than intelligence, declining subordinate objects; and directing the eye of the soul to that which is immortal and divine. The soul, thus refined, becomes form and reason, is altogether incorporeal and intellectual, and wholly participates of that divine nature, which is the fountain of loveliness, and of whatever is allied to the beautiful and fair. Hence the soul reduced to intellect, becomes astonishingly beautiful; for as the lambent flame which appears detached from the burning wood, enlightens its dark and smoky parts, so intellect irradiates and adorns the inferior powers of the soul, which, without it said, would be buried in the gloom of formless matter. But intellect, and whatever emanates from intellect, is not the foreign, but the proper ornament of the soul, for the being of the soul, when absorbed in intellect, is then alone real and true. It is, therefore, rightly said, that the beauty and good of the soul consists in her similitude to the Deity; for from hence flows all her beauty, and her allotment of a better being. But the beautiful itself is that which is called beings; and turpitude is of a different nature and participates more of non-entity than being.

But, perhaps, the good and the beautiful are the same, and must be investigated by one and the same process; and in like manner the base and the evil. And in the first rank we must place the beautiful, and consider it as the same with the good; from which immediately emanates intellect as beautiful. Next to this, we must consider the soul receiving its beauty from intellect, and every inferior beauty deriving its origin from the forming power of the soul, whether conversant in fair actions and offices, or sciences and arts. Lastly, bodies themselves participate of beauty from the soul, which, as something divine, and a portion of the beautiful itself, renders whatever it supervenes and subdues, beautiful as far as its natural capacity will admit.

Let us, therefore, re-ascend to the good itself, which every soul desires; and in which it can alone find perfect repose. For if anyone shall become acquainted with this source of beauty he will then know what I say, and after what manner he is beautiful. Indeed, whatever is desirable is a kind of good, since to this desire tends. But they alone pursue true good, who rise to intelligible beauty, and so far only tend to good itself; as far as they lay aside the deformed vestments of matter, with which they become connected in their descent. Just as those who penetrate into the holy retreats of sacred mysteries, are first purified and then divest themselves of their garments, until some one by such a process, having dismissed everything foreign from the God, by himself alone, beholds the solitary principle of

the universe, sincere, simple and pure, from which all things depend, and to whose transcendent perfections the eyes of all intelligent natures are directed, as the proper cause of being, life and intelligence. With what ardent love, with what strong desire will he who enjoys this transporting vision be inflamed while vehemently affecting to become one with this supreme beauty. For this it is ordained, that he who does not yet perceive him, yet desires him as good, but he who enjoys the vision is enraptured with his beauty, and is equally filled with admiration and delight. Hence, such a one is agitated with a salutary astonishment; is affected with the highest and truest love; derides vehement affections and inferior loves, and despises the beauty which he once approved. Such too, is the condition of those who, on perceiving the forms of gods or dæmons, no longer esteem the fairest of corporeal forms. What, then, must be the condition of that being, who beholds the beautiful itself?

In itself perfectly pure,* not confined by any corporeal bond, neither existing in the heavens, nor in the earth, nor to be imaged by the most lovely form imagination can conceive; since these are all adventitious and mixed, and mere secondary beauties, proceeding from the beautiful itself. If, then, anyone should ever behold that which is the source of munificence to others, remaining in itself, while it communicates to all, and receiving nothing, because possessing an inexhaustible fulness; and should so abide in the intuition, as to become similar to his nature, what more of beauty can such a one desire? For such beauty, since it is supreme in dignity aud excellence, cannot fail of rendering its votaries lovely and fair. Add too, that since the object of contest to souls is the highest beauty, we should strive for its acquisition with unabated ardour, lest we should be deserted of that blissful contemplation, which, whoever pursues in the right way, becomes blessed from the happy vision; and which he who does not obtain is unavoidably unhappy. For the miserable man is not he who neglects to pursue fair colours, and beautiful corporeal forms; who is deprived of power, and falls from dominion and empire; but he alone who is destitute of this divine possession, for which the ample dominion of the earth and sea and the still more extended empire of the heavens, must be relinquished and forgot, if, despising and leaving these far behind, we ever intend to arrive at substantial felicity, by beholding the beautiful itself.

What measures, then, shall we adopt? What machine employ, or what reason consult by means of which we may contemplate this ineffable

* "In itself perfectly pure." This is analogous to the description of the beautiful in the latter part of Diotima's Speech in the *Banquet;* a speech which is surely unequalled, both for elegance of composition and sublimity of sentiment. Indeed, all the disciples of Plato are remarkable for nothing so much as their profound and exalted conceptions of the Deity; and he who can read the works of Plotinus and Proclus in particular, and afterwards pity the weakness and erroneousness of their opinions on this subject, may be fairly presumed to be himself equally an object of pity and contempt.

beauty; a beauty abiding in the most divine sanctuary without ever proceeding from its sacred retreats lest it should be beheld by the profane and vulgar eye? We must enter deep into ourselves, and, leaving behind the objects of corporeal sight, no longer look back after any of the accustomed spectacles of sense. For, it is necessary that whoever beholds this beauty, should withdraw his view from the fairest corporeal forms; and, convinced that these are nothing more than images, vestiges and shadows of beauty, should eagerly soar to the fair original from which they are derived. For he who rushes to these lower beauties, as if grasping realities, when they are only like beautiful images appearing in water, will, doubtless, like him in the fable, by stretching after the shadow, sink into the lake and disappear. For, by thus embracing and adhering to corporeal forms, he is precipitated, not so much in his body as in his soul, into profound and horrid darkness; and thus blind, like those in the infernal regions, converses only with phantoms, deprived of the perception of what is real and true. It is here, then, we may more truly exclaim, "Let us depart from hence, and fly to our father's delightful land."* But, by what leading stars shall we direct our flight, and by what means avoid the magic power of Circe, and the detaining charms of Calypso?† For thus the fable of Ulysses obscurely signifies, which feigns him abiding an unwilling exile, though pleasant spectacles were continually presented to his sight; and every thing was promised to invite his stay which can delight the senses, and captivate the heart. But our true country, like that of Ulysses, is from whence we came, and where our father lives. But where is the ship to be found by which we can accomplish our flight? For our feet are

* "Let us depart," etc., *vide* Hom. *Iliad*, lib. ii., 140, et lib. ix., 27.

† Porphyry informs us in his excellent treatise, "De Antro Nymph," "that it was the opinion of Numenius, the Pythagorean (to which he also assents), that the person of Ulysses in the Odyssey, represents to us a man, who passes in a regular manner, over the dark and stormy sea of generation; and thus, at length, arrives at that region where tempests and seas are unknown, and finds a nation who

"Ne'er knew salt, or heard the billows roar."

Indeed, he who is conscious of the delusions of the present life and the enchantments of this material house, in which his soul is detained like Ulysses in the irriguous cavern of Calypso, will like him continually bewail his captivity, and inly pine for a return to his native country. Of such a one it may be said as of Ulysses (in the excellent and pathetic translation of Mr. Pope).

"But sad Ulysses by himself apart
Pour'd the big sorrows of his swelling heart,
All on the lonely shore he sate to weep
And roll'd his eyes around the restless deep
Tow'rd the lov'd coast he roll'd his eyes in vain
Till, dimmed with rising grief, they stream'd again."*

Such a one too, like Ulysses, will not always wish in vain for a passage over the dark ocean of a corporeal life, but by the assistance of Mercury, who may be considered as the emblem of reason, he will at length be enabled to quit the magic embraces of Calypso, the Goddess of Imagination, and to return again into the arms of Penelope, or Philosophy, the long lost and proper object of his love.

* *Odyssey*, book v., 103.

unequal to the task since they only take us from one part of the earth to another. May we not each of us say,

"What ships have I, what sailors to convey
What oars to cut the long laborious way."*

But it is in vain that we prepare horses to draw our ships to transport us to our native land. On the contrary, neglecting all these, as unequal to the task, and excluding them entirely from our view, having now closed the corporeal eye,† we must stir up and assume a purer eye within, which all men possess, but which is alone used by a few. What is it, then, this inward eye beholds? Indeed, suddenly raised to intellectual vision, it cannot perceive an object exceeding bright. The soul must therefore be first accustomed to contemplate fair studies and then beautiful works, not such as arise from the operations of art, but such as are the offspring of worthy men; and next to this it is necessary to view the soul, which is the parent of this lovely race. But you will ask, after what manner is this beauty of a worthy soul to be perceived? It is thus. Recall your thoughts inward, and if while contemplating yourself, you do not perceive yourself beautiful, imitate the statuary; who when he desires a beautiful statue cuts away what is superfluous, smooths and polishes what is rough, and never desists until he has given it all the beauty his art is able to effect. In this manner must you proceed, by lopping what is luxuriant, directing what is oblique, and, by purgation, illustrating what is obscure, and thus continue to polish and beautify your statue until the divine splendour of Virtue shines upon you, and Temperance seated in pure and holy majesty rises to your view. If you become thus purified residing in yourself, and having nothing any longer to impede this unity of mind, and no farther mixture to be found within, but perceiving your whole self to be a true light, and light alone; a light which though immense is not measured by any magnitude, nor limited by any circumscribing figure, but is everywhere immeasurable, as being greater than every measure, and more excellent than every quantity; if, perceiving yourself thus improved,

* See Pope's Homer's *Odyssey*, book v., 182.

† "We must stir up and assume a purer eye within." This inward eye is no other than intellect, which contains in its most inward recesses a certain ray of light, participated from the sun of Beauty and Good, by which the soul is enabled to behold and become united with her divinely solitary original. This divine ray, or, as Proclus calls it, mark or impression, is thus beautifully described by that philosopher (*Theol. Plat.*, p. 105): "The Author of the Universe," says he, "has planted in all beings impressions of his own perfect excellence, and through these he has placed all beings about himself, and is present with them in an ineffable manner, exempt from the universality of things. Hence, every being entering into the ineffable sanctuary of its own nature finds there a symbol of the Father of all. And by this mystical impression which corresponds to his nature they become united with their original, divesting themselves of their own essence and hastening to become his impression alone; and, through a desire of his unknown nature and of the fountain of good, to participate in him alone. And when they have ascended as far as to this cause they enjoy perfect tranquillity and are conversant in the perception of his divine progeny and of the love which all things naturally possess, and goodness, unknown, ineffable, without participation and transcendently full."

and trusting solely to yourself, as no longer requiring a guide, fix now steadfastly your mental view, for with the intellectual eye alone can such immense beauty be perceived. But if your eye is yet infected with any sordid concern, and not thoroughly refined, while it is on the stretch to behold this most shining spectacle, it will be immediately darkened and incapable of intuition, though someone should declare the spectacle present, which it might be otherwise able to discern. For, it is here necessary that the perceiver and the thing perceived should be similar to each other before true vision can exist. Thus the sensitive eye can never be able to survey the orb of the sun, unless strongly endued with solar fire, and participating largely of the vivid ray. Everyone therefore must become divine, and of godlike beauty, before he can gaze upon a god and the beautiful itself. Thus proceeding in the right way of beauty he will first ascend into the region of intellect, contemplating every fair species, the beauty of which he will perceive to be no other than ideas themselves; for all things are beautiful by the supervening irradiations of these, because they are the offspring and essence of intellect. But that which is superior to these is no other than the fountain of good, everywhere widely diffusing around the streams of beauty, and hence in discourse called the beautiful itself because beauty is its immediate offspring. But if you accurately distinguish the intelligible objects you will call the beautiful the receptacle of ideas; but the good itself, which is superior, the fountain and principle of the beautiful; or, you may place the first beautiful and the good in the same principle, independent of the beauty which there subsists.*

* But before I take my leave of Plotinus, I cannot refrain from addressing a few words to the Platonical part of my readers. If such then is the wisdom contained in the works of this philosopher, as we may conclude from the present specimen, is it fit so divine a treasure should be concealed in shameful oblivion? With respect to true philosophy you must be sensible that all modern sects are in a state of barbarous ignorance; for Materialism and its attendant Sensuality have darkened the eyes of the *many* with the mists of error, and are continually strengthening their corporeal tie. And can anything more effectually dissipate this increasing gloom than discourses composed by so sublime a genius, pregnant with the most profound conceptions, and everywhere full of intellectual light? Can anything so thoroughly destroy the phantom of false enthusiasm as establishing the real object of the true? Let us then boldly enlist ourselves under the banners of Plotinus, and, by his assistance, vigorously repel the encroachments of error, plunge her dominions into the abyss of forgetfulness, and disperse the darkness of her baneful night. For indeed there never was a period which required so much philosophic exertion, or such vehement contention from the lovers of Truth. On all sides nothing of philosophy remains but the name, and this is become the subject of the vilest prostitution; since it is not only engrossed by the naturalist, chemist, and anatomist, but is usurped by the mechanic in every trifling invention, and made subservient to the lucre of traffic and merchandise. There cannot surely be a greater proof of the degeneracy of the times than so unparalleled a degradation and so barbarous a perversion of terms. For the word philosophy, which implies the love of wisdom, is now become the ornament of folly. In the times of its inventor, and for many succeeding ages, it was expressive of modesty and worth; in our days it is the badge of impudence and vain pretensions. It was formerly the symbol of the profound contemplative genius, it is now the mark of the superficial and unthinking practitioner. It was once reverenced by kings and clothed in the robes of nobility; it is now (according to its true acceptation) abandoned and despised and ridiculed

by the vilest plebeian. Permit me, then, my friends, to address you in the words of Achilles to Hector:

"Rouse, then, your forces this important hour
Collect your strength and call forth all your pow'r."

Since, to adopt the animated language of Neptune to the Greeks,

" . . On dastards, dead to fame,
I waste no anger, for they feel no shame,
But you, the pride, the flower of all our host,
My heart weeps blood, to see your glory lost."

Nor deem the exhortation impertinent, and the danger groundless.

"For lo! the fated time, th' appointed shore,
Hark, the gates burst, the brazen barriers roar."

Impetuous ignorance is thundering at the bulwarks of philosophy and her sacred retreats are in danger of being demolished, through our feeble resistance. Rise then, my friends, and the victory will be ours. The foe is indeed numerous, but at the same time feeble; and the weapons of truth in the hands of vigorous union, descend with irresistible force, and are fatal wherever they fall.

FINIS.

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On the Cave of the Nymphs in the Thirteenth Book of the Odyssey.

Reprinted from "The Select Works of Porphyry."

Translated by THOMAS TAYLOR.

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ON THE CAVE OF THE NYMPHS IN THE THIRTEENTH BOOK OF THE ODYSSEY.

Reprinted from "The Select Works of Porphyry,"

Translated by THOMAS TAYLOR.

1. WHAT does Homer obscurely signify by the cave in Ithaca, which he describes in the following verses?

> "High at the head a branching olive grows
> And crowns the pointed cliffs with shady boughs.
> A cavern pleasant, though involved in night,
> Beneath it lies, the Naiades' delight:
> Where bowls and urns of workmanship divine
> And massy beams in native marble shine;
> On which the Nymphs amazing webs display,
> Of purple hue and exquisite array.
> The busy bees within the urns secure
> Honey delicious, and like nectar pure.
> Perpetual waters through the grotto glide,
> A lofty gate unfolds on either side;
> That to the north is pervious to mankind:
> The sacred south t'immortals is consign'd.'

That the poet indeed, does not narrate these particulars from historical information, is evident from this, that those who have given us a description of the island, have, as Cronius* says, made no mention of such a cave being found in it. This likewise, says he, is manifest, that it would be absurd for Homer to expect, that in describing a cave fabricated merely by poetical license and thus artificially opening a path to Gods and men in the region of Ithaca, he should gain the belief of mankind. And it is equally absurd to suppose, that nature herself should point out, in this place, one path for the descent of all mankind, and again another path for all the Gods. For, indeed, the whole world is full of Gods and men; but it is impossible to be persuaded, that in the Ithacensian cave men descend, and Gods ascend. Cronius therefore, having premised this much, says, that it is evident, not only to the wise but also to the vulgar, that the poet, under the veil of allegory, conceals some mysterious signification; thus compelling others to explore what the gate of men is, and also what is the gate of the Gods: what he means by asserting that this cave of the Nymphs has two gates; and why it is both pleasant and obscure, since darkness is by no means delightful, but is rather productive of aversion

* This Cronius, the Pythagorean, is also mentioned by Porphyry in his life of Plotinus.

and horror. Likewise, what is the reason why it is not simply said to be the cave of the Nymphs, but it is accurately added, of the Nymphs which are called Naiades? Why also, is the cave represented as containing bowls and amphoræ, when no mention is made of their receiving any liquor, but bees are said to deposit their honey in these vessels as in hives? Then, again, why are oblong beams adapted to weaving placed here for the Nymphs; and these not formed from wood, or any other pliable matter, but from stone, as well as the amphoræ and bowls? Which last circumstance is, indeed, less obscure; but that, on these stony beams, the Nymphs should weave purple garments, is not only wonderful to the sight, but also to the auditory sense. For who would believe that Goddesses weave garments in a cave involved in darkness, and on stony beams; especially while he hears the poet asserting, that the purple webs of the Goddesses were visible. In addition to these things likewise, this is admirable, that the cave should have a twofold entrance; one made for the descent of men, but the other for the ascent of Gods. And again that the gate, which is pervious by men, should be said to be turned against the north wind, but the portal of the Gods to the south; and why the poet did not rather make use of the west and the east for this purpose; since nearly all temples have their statues and entrances turned towards the east; but those who enter them look towards the west, when standing with their faces turned towards the statues they honour and worship the Gods. Hence, since this narration is full of such obscurities, it can neither be a fiction casually devised for the purpose of procuring delight, nor an exposition of a topical history; but something allegorical must be indicated in it by the poet, who likewise mystically places an olive near the cave. All which particulars the ancients thought very laborious to investigate and unfold; and we, with their assistance, shall now endeavour to develop the secret meaning of the allegory. Those persons, therefore, appear to have written very negligently about the situation of the place, who think that the cave, and what is narrated concerning it, are nothing more than a fiction of the poet. But the best and most accurate writers of geography, and among these Artemidorus the Ephesian, in the fifth book of his work, which consists of eleven books, thus writes: "The island of Ithaca, containing an extent of eighty-five stadia,* is distant from Panormus, a port of Cephalenia, about twelve stadia. It has a port named Phorcys, in which there is a shore, and on that shore a cave, in which the Phæacians are reported to have placed Ulysses." This cave, therefore, will not be entirely an Homeric fiction. But whether the poet describes it as it really is, or whether he has added something to it of his own invention, nevertheless the same enquiries remain; whether the intention of the

* *I.e.*, rather more than ten Italian miles and a half, eight stadia making an Italian mile.

poet is investigated, or of those who founded the cave. For, neither did the ancients establish temples without fabulous symbols, nor does Homer rashly narrate the particulars pertaining to things of this kind. But how much the more any one endeavours to show that this description of the cave is not an Homeric fiction, but prior to Homer was consecrated to the Gods, by so much the more will this consecrated cave be found to be full of ancient wisdom. And on this account it deserves to be investigated, and it is requisite that its symbolical consecration should be amply unfolded into light.

2. The ancients, indeed, very properly consecrated a cave to the world, whether assumed collectively, according to the whole of itself, or separately according to its parts. Hence they considered earth as a symbol of that matter of which the world consists; on which account some thought that matter and earth are the same; through the cave indicating the world, which was generated from matter. For caves are, for the most part, spontaneous productions, and connascent with the earth, being comprehended by one uniform mass of stone; the interior parts of which are concave, but the exterior parts are extended over an indefinite portion of land. And the world being spontaneously produced (*i.e.*, being produced by no external, but from an internal cause), and being also self-adherent, is allied to matter; which, according to a secret signification, is denominated a stone and a rock, on account of its sluggish and repercussive nature with respect to form; the ancients, at the same time, asserting that matter is infinite through its privation of form. Since, however, it is continually flowing, and is of itself destitute of the supervening investments of form, through which it participates of *morphe*,* and becomes visible, the flowing waters, darkness, or, as the poet says, obscurity of the cavern, were considered by the ancients as apt symbols of what the world contains, on account of the matter with which it is connected. Through matter, therefore, the world is obscure and dark; but through the connecting power, and orderly distribution of form, from which also it is called *world*, it is beautiful and delightful. Hence it may very properly be denominated a cave; as being lovely, indeed, to him who first enters into it, through its participation of forms, but obscure to him who surveys its foundation and examines it with an intellectual eye. So that its exterior and superficial parts, indeed, are pleasant, but its interior and profound parts are obscure (and its very bottom is darkness itself). Thus also the Persians, mystically signifying the descent of the soul into the sublunary regions, and its regression from it, initiate the mystic (or him who is admitted to the arcane sacred rites) in a place which they denominate a

* But *morphe*, as we are informed by Simplicius, pertains to the colour, figure, and magnitude of superficies.

cavern. For, as Eubulus says, Zoroaster was the first who consecrated in the neighbouring mountains of Persia, a spontaneously produced cave, florid, and having fountains, in honour of Mithra, the maker and father of all things; a cave, according to Zoroaster, bearing a resemblance of the world, which was fabricated by Mithra. But the things contained in the cavern being arranged according to commensurate intervals, were symbols of the mundane elements and climates.

3. After this Zoroaster likewise, it was usual with others to perform the rites pertaining to the mysteries in caverns and dens, whether spontaneously produced, or made by the hands. For as they established temples, groves, and altars to the celestial Gods, but to the terrestrial Gods, and to heroes, altars alone, and to the subterranean divinities pits and cells; so to the world they dedicated caves and dens; as likewise to Nymphs*, on account of the water which trickles, or is diffused in caverns, over which the Naiades, as we shall shortly observe, preside. Not only however, did the ancients make a cavern, as we have said, to be a symbol of the world, or of a generated and sensible nature; but they also assumed it as a symbol of all invisible powers; because as caverns are obscure and dark, so the essence of these powers is occult. Hence Saturn fabricated a cavern in the ocean itself and concealed in it his children. Thus, too, Ceres educated Proserpine with her Nymphs in a cave; and many other particulars of this kind may be found in the writings of theologists. But that the ancients dedicated caverns to Nymphs and especially to Naiades, who dwell near fountains, and who are called Naiades from the streams over which they preside, is manifest from the hymn to Apollo, in which it is said: "The Nymphs residing in caves shall deduce fountains of intellectual waters to thee (according to the divine voice of the Muses), which are the progeny of a terrene spirit. Hence waters, bursting through every river, shall exhibit to mankind perpetual effusions of sweet streams."† From hence, as it appears to me, the Pythagoreans, and after them Plato, showed that the world is a cavern and a den. For the powers which are the leaders of souls, thus speak in a verse of Empedocles:

"Now at this secret cavern we're arrived."

And by Plato, in the seventh book of his *Republic*, it is said, "Behold men as if dwelling in a subterraneous cavern, and in a den-like habitation, whose entrance is widely expanded to the admission of the light through the whole cave." But when the other person in the dialogue says: "You

* "Nymphs," says Hermias in his *Scholia* on the *Phaedrus* of Plato, "are Goddesses who preside over regeneration, and are ministrant to Bacchus, the offspring of Semele. Hence they dwell near water, that is, they are conversant with generation. But this Bacchus supplies the regeneration of the whole sensible world."

† These lines are not to be found in any of the hymns now extant, ascribed to Homer.

adduce an unusual and wonderful similitude," he replies, "The whole of this image, friend Glauco, must be adapted to what has been before said, assimilating this receptacle, which is visible through the sight to the habitation of a prison; but the light of the fire which is in it to the power of the sun."

4. That theologists therefore considered caverns as symbols of the world, and of mundane powers, is through this, manifest. And it has been already observed by us, that they also considered a cave as a symbol of the intelligible essence; being impelled to do so by different and not the same conceptions. For they were of opinion that a cave is a symbol of the sensible world because caverns are dark, stony, and humid; and they asserted that the world is a thing of this kind, through the matter of which it consists, and through its repercussive and flowing nature. But they thought it to be a symbol of the intelligible world, because that world is invisible to sensible perception, and possesses a firm and stable essence. Thus, also, partial powers are unapparent, and especially those which are inherent in matter. For they formed these symbols, from surveying the spontaneous production of caves, and their nocturnal, dark, and stony nature; and not entirely, as some suspect, from directing their attention to the figure of a cavern. For every cave is not spherical, as is evident from this Homeric cave with a two-fold entrance. But since a cavern has a two-fold similitude, the present cave must not be assumed as an image of the intelligible but of the sensible essence. For in consequence of containing perpetually-flowing streams of water, it will not be a symbol of an intelligible hypostasis, but of a material essence. On this account also it is sacred to Nymphs, not the mountain *or rural Nymphs*, or others of the like kind, but to the Naiades, who are thus denominated from streams of water. For we peculiarly call the Naiades, and the powers that preside over waters, Nymphs; and this term also, is commonly applied to all souls descending into generation. For the ancients thought that these souls are incumbent on water which is inspired by divinity, as Numenius says, who adds, that on this account, a prophet asserts, that the Spirit of God moved on the waters. The Egyptians likewise, on this account, represent all dæmons and also the sun, and in short, all the planets,* not standing on anything solid, but on a sailing vessel; for souls descending into generation fly to moisture. Hence also, Heraclitus says, "that moisture appears delightful and not deadly to souls;" but the lapse into generation is delightful to them. And in another place (speaking of unembodied souls), he says, "We live their death, and we die their life. Hence, the poet calls

* Martianus Capella in lib. ii. *De Nuptiis Philologiæ*, speaking of the sun, says: "Ibi quandam navim, totius naturæ cursibus diversa cupiditate moderantem, cunctaque flammarum congestione plenissimam, beatis circumactam mercibus conspicatur. Cui *nautæ septem* germani, tamen suique consimiles præsidebant," etc. In this passage the seven sailors are evidently the seven planets.

those that are in generation *humid*, because they have souls which are *profoundly* steeped in moisture. On this account, such souls delight in blood and humid seed; but water is the nutriment of the souls of plants. Some likewise are of opinion, that the bodies in the air, and in the heavens, are nourished by vapours from fountains and rivers, and other exhalations. But the Stoics assert, that the sun is nourished by the exhalation from the sea; the moon from the vapours of fountains and river; and the stars from the exhalation of the earth. Hence, according to them, the sun is an intellectual composition formed from the sea; the moon from the river waters and the stars from terrene exhalations.

5. It is necessary, therefore, that souls, whether they are corporeal or incorporeal, while they attract to themselves body, and especially such as are about to be bound to blood and moist bodies, should verge to humidity, and be corporalized, in consequence of being drenched in moisture. Hence the souls of the dead are evocated by the effusion of bile and blood; and souls that are lovers of body, by attracting a moist spirit, condense this humid vehicle like a cloud. For moisture condensed in the air constitutes a cloud. But the pneumatic vehicle being condensed in these souls, becomes visible through an excess of moisture. And among the number of these we must reckon those apparitions of images, which, from a spirit coloured by the influence of imagination, present themselves to mankind. But pure souls are averse from generation; so that as Heraclitus says, "*a dry soul is the wisest.*" Hence, here also the spirit becomes moist and more aqueous through the desire of generation, the soul thus attracting a humid vapour from verging to generation. Souls, therefore, proceeding into generation are the nymphs called naiades. Hence it is usual to call those that are married nymphs, as being conjoined to generation, and to pour water into baths from fountains, or rivers, or perpetual rills.

6. This world, then, is sacred and pleasant to souls who have now proceeded into nature, and to natal dæmons, though it is essentially dark and *obscure;* from which some have suspected that souls also are of an *obscure nature* and essentially consist of air. Hence a cavern, which is both pleasant and dark, will be appropriately consecrated to souls on the earth, conformably to its similitude to the world, in which, as in the greatest of all temples, souls reside. To the nymphs likewise, who preside over waters, a cavern, in which there are perpetually flowing streams, is adapted. Let, therefore, this present cavern be consecrated to souls, and among the more partial powers, to nymphs that preside over streams and fountains, and who, on this account, are called *fontal* and *naiades.* What, therefore, are the different symbols, some of which are adapted to souls, but others to the aquatic powers, in order that we may apprehend that this cavern is consecrated in common to both? Let the stony bowls, then, and

the amphoræ be symbols of the aquatic nymphs. For these are, indeed, the symbols of Bacchus, but their composition is fictile, *i.e.*, consists of baked earth, and these are friendly to the vine, the gift of God; since the fruit of the vine is brought to a proper maturity by the celestial fire of the sun. But the stony bowls and amphoræ are in the most eminent degree adapted to the nymphs who preside over the water that flows from rocks. And to souls that descend into generation and are occupied in corporeal energies, what symbol can be more appropriate than those instruments pertaining to weaving? Hence, also, the poet ventures to say, "that on these, the nymphs weave purple webs, admirable to the view." For the formation of the flesh is on and about the bones, which in the bodies of animals resemble stones. Hence these instruments of weaving consist of stone, and not of any other matter. But the purple webs will evidently be the flesh which is woven from the blood. For purple woollen garments are tinged from blood, and wool is dyed from animal juice. The generation of flesh, also, is through and from blood. Add, too, that the body is a garment with which the soul is invested, a thing wonderful to the sight, whether this refers to the composition of the soul, or contributes to the colligation of the soul (to the whole of a visible essence). Thus, also, Proserpine, who is the inspective guardian of everything produced from seed, is represented by Orpheus as weaving a web*, and the heavens are called by the ancients a veil, in consequence of being, as it were, the vestment of the celestial Gods.

7. Why, therefore, are the amphoræ said not to be filled with water, but with honey-combs? For in these, Homer says, the bees deposit their honey, which signifies to deposit aliment. And honey is the nutriment of bees. Theologists also have made honey subservient to many and different symbols because it consists of many powers; since it is both cathartic and

* The theological meaning of this Orphic fiction is beautifully unfolded by Proclus as follows: "Orpheus says that the vivific cause of partible natures, (*i.e.*, Proserpine), while she remained on high, weaving the order of celestials, was a nymph, as being undefiled; and in consequence of this connected with Jupiter and abiding in her appropriate manners; but that, proceeding from her proper habitation, she left her webs unfinished, was ravished; having been ravished, was married; and that being married, she generated in order that she might animate things which have an adventitious life. For the unfinished state of her webs indicates, I think, that the universe is imperfect or unfinished, as far as to perpetual animals (*i.e.*, the universe would be imperfect if nothing inferior to the celestial Gods was produced). Hence Plato says, that the one Demiurgus calls on the many Demiurgi to weave together the mortal and immortal natures; after a manner reminding us, that the addition of the mortal genera is the perfection of the textorial life of the universe, and also exciting our recollection of the divine Orphic fable, and affording us interpretative causes of the unfinished webs of Proserpine."—See Vol. II., p. 356, of my translation of Proclus on the *Timæus*.

The *unfinished webs* of Proserpine are also alluded to by Claudian in his poem "De Raptu Proserpinæ," in the following verse:—

"Sensit adesse Deas, *imperfectumque laborem*
Deserit."

I only add, that, by ancient theologists, the shuttle was considered as a signature of *separating*, a cup of *vivific*, a sceptre of *ruling*, and a key of *guardian* power.

preservative. Hence, through honey, bodies are preserved from putrefaction, and inveterate ulcers are purified. Farther still, it is also sweet to the taste, and is collected by bees, who are ox-begotten from flowers. When, therefore, those who are initiated in the Leontic sacred rites, pour honey instead of water on their hands; they are ordered (by the initiator) to have their hands pure from everything productive of molestation, and from everything noxious and detestable. Other initiators (into the same mysteries) employ fire, which is of a cathartic nature, as an appropriate purification. And they likewise purify the tongue from all defilement of evil with honey. But the Persians, when they offer honey to the guardian of fruits, consider it as the symbol of a preserving and defending power. Hence some persons have thought that the nectar and ambrosia*, which the poet pours into the nostrils of the dead, for the purpose of preventing putrefaction, is honey; since honey is the food of the Gods. On this account also, the same poet somewhere calls nectar golden; for such is the colour of honey (viz., it is a deep yellow). But whether or not honey is to be taken for nectar, we shall elsewhere more accurately examine. In Orpheus, likewise, Saturn is ensnared by Jupiter through honey. For Saturn, being filled with honey, is intoxicated, his senses are darkened, as if from the effects of wine, and he sleeps; just as Porus, in the banquet of Plato, is filled with nectar; for wine was not (says he) yet known. The Goddess Night, too, in Orpheus, advises Jupiter to make use of honey as an artifice. For she says to him:—

> When stretch'd beneath the lofty oaks you view
> Saturn, with honey by the bees produc'd
> Sunk in ebriety†, fast bind the God.

This therefore, takes place, and Saturn being bound is emasculated in

* The theological meaning of nectar and ambrosia is beautifully unfolded by Hermias, in his *Scholia* on the *Phædrus* of Plato, published by Ast, Lips., 1810, p. 145, where he informs us, "that *ambrosia* is analogous to dry nutriment, and that on this account it signifies an establishment in causes: but that *nectar* is analogous to moist food, and that it signifies the providential attention of the Gods to secondary natures; the former being denominated, according to *a privation of the mortal and corruptible;* but the latter, according to *a privation of the funeral and sepulchral.* And when the Gods are represented as energizing providentially, they are said to drink nectar. Thus Homer in the beginning of the 4th Book of the *Iliad*:—

> "Now with each other, on the golden floor,
> Seated near Jove, the Gods converse; to whom
> The venerable Hebe nectar bears
> In golden goblets; and as these flow round
> Th' immortals turn their careful eyes on Troy."

For then they providentially attend to the Trojans. The possession, therefore, of immutable providence by the Gods is signified by their drinking nectar; the exertion of this providence, by their beholding Troy, and their communicating with each other in providential energies, by receiving the goblets from each other.

† Ebriety, when ascribed to divine natures by ancient theologists, signifies a deific superessential energy, or an energy superior to intellect. Hence, when Saturn is said by Orpheus to have been intoxicated with honey or nectar, the meaning is, that he then energised providentially, in a deific and super-intellectual manner.

the same manner as Heaven; the theologist obscurely signifying by this that divine natures become through pleasure bound, and drawn down into the realms of generation; and also that, when dissolved in pleasure they emit certain seminal powers. Hence Saturn emasculates Heaven, when descending to earth through a desire of generation.* But the sweetness of honey signifies, with theologists, the same thing as the pleasure arising from generation, by which Saturn, being ensnared was castrated. For Saturn, and his sphere, are the first of the orbs that move contrary to the course of Coelum or the heavens. Certain powers, however, descend both from Heaven (or the inerratic sphere) and the planets. But Saturn receives the powers of Heaven and Jupiter the powers of Saturn. Since, therefore, honey is assumed in purgations, and as an antidote to putrefaction, and is indicative of the pleasure which draws souls downward to generation; it is a symbol well adapted to aquatic Nymphs, on account of the unputrescent nature of the waters over which they preside, their purifying power, and their co-operation with generation. For water co-operates in the work of generation. On this account the bees are said, by the poet, to deposit their honey in bowls and amphoræ; the bowls being a symbol of fountains, and therefore a bowl is placed near to Mithra, instead of a fountain; but the amphoræ are symbols of the vessels with which we draw water from fountains. And fountains and streams are adapted to aquatic Nymphs, and still more so to the Nymphs that are souls, which the ancient peculiarly called bees, as the efficient causes of sweetness, Hence Sophocles does not speak unappropriately when he says of souls:—

> "In swarms while wandering, from the dead,
> A humming sound is heard."

8. The priestesses of Ceres, also, as being initiated into the mysteries of the terrene Goddess, were called by the ancients bees; and Proserpine herself was denominated by them *honied*. The moon, likewise, who presides over generation, was called by them a bee, and also a bull. And Taurus is the exaltation of the moon. But bees are ox-begotten. And this application is also given to souls proceeding into generation. The God, likewise, who is occultly connected with generation, is a stealer of oxen. To which may be added, that honey is considered as a symbol of death, and on this

* Porphyry, though he excelled in philosophical, was deficient in theological knowledge; of which what he now says of the castrations of Saturn and Heaven is a remarkable instance. For ancient theologists, by things preternatural, adumbrated the transcendent nature of the Gods; by such as are irrational, a power more divine than all reason; and by things apparently base, incorporeal beauty. Hence in the fabulous narrations to which Porphyry now alludes, the genital parts must be considered as symbols of prolific power; and the castration of these parts as signifying the progression of this power into a subject order. So that the fable means that the prolific powers of Saturn are called forth into progression by Jupiter, and those of Heaven by Saturn; Jupiter being inferior to Saturn, and Saturn to Heaven.—See the "Apology for the Fables of Homer" in Vol. I. of my translation of Plato.

account it is usual to offer libations of honey to the terrestrial Gods; but gall is considered as a symbol of life; whether it is obscurely signified by this, that the life of the soul dies through pleasure, but through bitterness the soul resumes its life, whence, also bile is sacrificed to the Gods; or whether it is, because death liberates from molestation, but the present life is laborious and bitter. All souls, however, proceeding into generation, are not simply called bees, but those who will live in it justly and who, after having performed such things as are acceptable to the Gods, will again return (to their kindred stars). For this insect loves to return to the place from whence it first came, and is eminently just and sober. Whence, also, the libations which are made with honey are called sober. Bees, likewise, do not sit on beans, which were considered by the ancients as a symbol of generation proceeding in a right line, and without flexure; because this leguminous vegetable is almost the only seed-bearing plant whose stalk is perforated throughout without any intervening knots.* We must therefore admit, that honey-combs and bees are appropriate and common symbols of the aquatic Nymphs, and of souls that are married (as it were) to (the humid and fluctuating nature of) generation.

9. Caves, therefore, in the most remote periods of antiquity were consecrated to the Gods, before temples were erected to them. Hence, the Curetes in Crete dedicated a cavern to Jupiter; in Arcadia, a cave was sacred to the Moon, and to Lycean Pan; and in Naxus, to Bacchus. But wherever Mithra was known, they propitiated the God in a cavern. With respect, however, to the Ithacensian cave, Homer was not satisfied with saying that it had two gates, but adds that one of the gates was turned towards the north, but the other, which was more divine, to the south. He also says that the northern gate was pervious to descent, but does not indicate whether this was also the case with the southern gate. For of this, he only says, "It is inaccessible to men, but it is the path of the immortals."

10. It remains, therefore, to investigate what is indicated by this narration; whether the poet describes a cavern which was in reality consecrated by others, or whether it is an enigma of his own invention. Since, however, a cavern is an image and symbol of the world, as Numenius and his familiar Cronius assert, there are two extremities in the heavens, *viz.*, the winter tropic, than which nothing is more southern, and the summer tropic, than which nothing is more northern. But the summer tropic is in Cancer, and the winter tropic in Capricorn. And since Cancer is nearest to us, it is very properly attributed to the Moon, which is the nearest of all the heavenly bodies to the earth. But as the southern pole

* Hence, when Pythagoras exhorted his disciples to abstain from beans, he intended to signify, that they should beware of a continued and perpetual descent into the realms of generation.

by its great distance is invisible to us, hence Capricorn is attributed to Saturn, the highest and most remote of all the planets. Again, the signs from Cancer to Capricorn are situated in the following order: and the first of these is Leo, which is the house of the Sun; afterwards Virgo, which is the house of Mercury; Libra, the house of Venus; Scorpio, of Mars; Sagittarius, of Jupiter; and Capricorn, of Saturn. But from Capricorn in an inverse order Aquarius is attributed to Saturn; Pisces to Jupiter; Aries to Mars; Taurus to Venus; Gemini to Mercury; and in the last place Cancer to the Moon.

11. Theologists therefore assert, that these two gates are Cancer and Capricorn; but Plato calls them entrances. And of these, theologists say, that Cancer is the gate through which souls descend; but Capricorn that through which they ascend. Cancer is indeed northern, and adapted to descent; but Capricorn is southern, and adapted to ascent.* The northern

* Macrobius, in the twelfth chapter of his *Commentary* on "Scipio's Dream," has derived some of the ancient arcana which it contains from what is here said by Porphyry. A part of what he has farther added, I shall translate on account of its excellence and connexion with the above passage. "Pythagoras thought that the empire of Pluto began downwards from the milky way, because souls falling from thence appear to have already receded from the Gods. Hence he asserts that the nutriment of milk is first offered to infants, because their first motion commences from the galaxy, when they begin to fall into terrene bodies. On this account, since those who are about to descend are yet in *Cancer*, and have not left the milky way, they rank in the order of the Gods. But when, by falling, they arrive at the *Lion*, in this constellation they enter on the exordium of their future condition. And because, in the *Lion*, the rudiments of birth and certain primary exercises of human nature, commence; but *Aquarius* is opposite to the *Lion*, and presently sets after the *Lion* rises; hence, when the sun is in *Aquarius*, funeral rites are performed to departed souls, because he is then carried in a sign which is contrary or adverse to human life. From the confine, therefore, in which the zodiac and galaxy touch each other, the soul, descending from a round figure, which is the only divine form, is produced into a cone by its defluxion. And as a line is generated from a point and proceeds into length from an indivisible, so the soul, from its own point, which is a monad, passes into the duad, which is the first extension. And this is the essence which Plato, in the *Timaeus*, calls impartible and at the same time partible, when he speaks of the nature of the mundane soul. For as the soul of the world, so likewise that of man, will be found to be in one respect without division, if the simplicity of a divine nature is considered; and in another respect partible, if we regard the diffusion of the former through the world, and of the latter through the members of the body.

"As soon, therefore, as the soul gravitates towards body in this first production of herself, she begins to experience a material tumult, that is, matter flowing into her essence. And this is what Plato remarks in the *Phaedo*, that the soul is drawn into body staggering with recent intoxication; signifying by this the new drink of matter's impetuous flood, through which the soul, becoming defiled and heavy, is drawn into a terrene situation. But the starry *cup* placed between Cancer and the Lion is a symbol of this mystic truth, signifying that descending souls first experience intoxication in that part of the heavens throught the influx of matter. Hence oblivion, the companion of intoxication, there begins silently to creep into the recesses of the soul. For if souls retained in their descent to bodies the memory of divine concerns, of which they were conscious in the heavens, there would be no dissension among men about divinity. But all, indeed, in descending, drink of oblivion; though some more, and others less. On this account, though truth is not apparent to all men on the earth, yet all exercise their opinions about it; because a *defect of memory is the origin of opinion*. But those discover most who have drunk least of oblivion, because they easily remember what they had known before in the heavens.

"The soul, therefore, falling with this first weight from the zodiac and milky way into each of the subject spheres, is not only clothed with the accession of a luminous body, but produces the particular motions which it is to exercise in the respective orbs. Thus in Saturn it energizes according to a ratiocinative and intellective power: in the sphere of Jove, according to a practic power; in the orb of the Sun, according to a sensitive and

parts, likewise, pertain to souls descending into generation. And the gates of the cavern which are turned to the north are rightly said to be pervious to the descent of men; but the southern gates are not the avenues of the Gods, but of souls ascending to the Gods. On this account, the poet does not say that they are the avenues of the Gods, but of immortals; this appellation being also common to our souls, which are *per se*, or essentially, immortal. It is said that Parmenides mentions these two gates in his treatise "On the Nature of Things," as likewise that they are not unknown to the Romans and Egyptians. For the Romans celebrate their Saturnalia when the Sun is in Capricorn, and during this festivity, slaves wear the shoes of those that are free, and all things are distributed among them in common; the legislator obscurely signifying by this ceremony that through this gate of the heavens, those who are now born slaves will be liberated through the Saturnian festival, and the house attributed to Saturn, *i.e.*, Capricorn, when they live again and return to the fountain of life. Since, however, the path from Capricorn is adapted to ascent, hence the Romans denominate that month in which the Sun, turning from Capricorn to the east, directs his course to the north, Januarius, or January, from *janua*, a gate. But with the Egyptians, the beginning of the year is not Aquarius, as with the Romans, but Cancer. For the star Sothis, which the Greeks call the Dog, is near to Cancer. And the rising of Sothis is the new moon with them, this being the principle of generation to the world. On this account, the gates of the Homeric cavern are not dedicated to the east and west, nor to the equinoctial signs, Aries and

imaginative nature; but according to the motion of desire in the planet of Venus; of pronouncing and interpreting what it perceives in the orb of Mercury; and according to a plantal or vegetable nature and a power of acting on body, when it enters into the lunar globe. And this sphere, as it is the last among the divine orders, so it is the first in our terrene situation. For this body, as it is the dregs of divine natures, so it is the first animal substance. And this is the difference between terrene and supernal bodies (under the latter of which I comprehend the heavens, the stars, and the more elevated elements), that the latter are called upwards to be the seat of the soul, and merit immortality from the very nature of the region and an imitation of sublimity; but the soul is drawn down to these terrene bodies, and is on this account said to die when it is enclosed in this fallen region, and the seat of mortality. Nor ought it to cause any disturbance that we have so often mentioned the death of the soul, which we have pronounced to be immortal. For the soul is not extinguished by its own proper death, but is only overwhelmed for a time. Nor does it lose the benefit of perpetuity by its temporal demersion. Since, when it deserves to be purified from the contagion of vice, through its entire refinement from body, it will be restored to the light of perennial life, and will return to its pristine integrity and perfection."

"The powers, however, of the planets, which are the causes of the energies of the soul in the several planetary spheres, are more accurately described by Proclus in p. 260 of his admirable Commentary on the *Timaeus*, as follows:—"If you are willing, also, you may say that of the beneficent planets the Moon is the cause to Mortals of nature, being herself the visible statue of fontal nature. But the Sun is the Demiurgus of everything sensible, in consequence of being the cause of sight and visibility. Mercury is the cause of the motions of the phantasy; for of the imaginative essence itself, so far as sense and phantasy are one, the Sun is the producing cause. But Venus is the cause of epithymetic appetites (or of the appetites pertaining to desire), and Mars of the irascible motions which are conformable to nature. Of all vital powers, however, Jupiter is the common cause; but of all gnostic powers, Saturn. For all the irrational forms are divided into these."

Libra, but to the north and south, and to those celestial signs which towards the south are most southerly, and, towards the north are most northerly; because this cave was sacred to souls and aquatic Nymphs. But these places are adapted to souls descending into generation, and afterwards separating themselves from it. Hence, a place near to the equinoctial circle was assigned to Mithra as an appropriate seat. And on this account he bears the sword of Aries, which is a martial sign. He is likewise carried in the Bull, which is the sign of Venus. For Mithra, as well as the Bull, is the Demiurgus and lord of generation.* But he is placed near the equinoctial circle, having the northern parts on his right hand, and the southern on his left. They likewise arranged towards the south the southern hemisphere because it is hot; but the northern hemisphere towards the north, through the coldness of the north wind.

12. The ancients, likewise, very reasonably connected winds with souls proceeding into generation, and again separating themselves from it, because, as some think, souls attract a spirit, and have a pneumatic essence. But the north wind is adapted to souls falling into generation; and, on this account, the northern blasts refresh those who are dying, and when they can scarcely draw their breath. On the contrary the southern gales dissolve life. For the north wind, indeed, from its superior coldness, congeals (as it were the animal life), and retains it in the frigidity of terrene generation. But the south wind, being hot, dissolves this life, and sends it upward to the heat of a divine nature. Since, however, our terrene habitation is more northern, it is proper that souls which are born in it should be familiar with the north wind; but those that exchange this life for a better, with the south wind. This also is the cause why the north wind is, at its commencement, great; but the south wind, at its termination. for the former is situated directly over the inhabitants of the northern part of the globe, but the latter is at a great distance from them; and the blast from places very remote, is more tardy than from such as are near. But when it is coacervated, then it blows abundantly and with vigour. Since, however, souls proceed into generation through the northern gate, hence this wind is said to be amatory. For, as the poet says,

> Boreas, enamour'd of the sprightly train,
> Conceal'd his godhead in a flowing mane.
> With voice dissembled to his loves he neighed,
> And coursed the dappled beauties o'er the mead;
> Hence sprung twelve others of unrivalled kind,
> Swift as their mother mares, and father wind.†

* Hence Phanes, or Protogonus, who is the paradigm of the universe, and who saw absorbed by Jupiter, the Demiurgus, is represented by Orpheus as having the head of a *bull* among other heads with which he is adorned. And in the Orphic hymn to him he is called *bull-roarer*.

† *Iliad*, lib. xx., v. 223, etc.

It is also said, that Boreas ravished Orithya,* from whom he begot Zetis and Calais. But as the south is attributed to the Gods, hence, when the Sun is at its meridian. the curtains in temples are drawn before the statues of the Gods; in consequence of observing the Homeric precept: "That it is not lawful for men to enter temples when the Sun is inclined to the south," for this is the path of the immortals, Hence, when the God is at his meridian altitude, the ancients placed a symbol of mid-day and of the south in the gates of the temples, and on this account, in other gates also, it was not lawful to speak at all times, because gates were considered as sacred. Hence, too, the Pythagoreans, and the wise men among the Egyptians, forbade speaking while passing through doors or gates; for then they venerated in silence that God who is the principle of wholes (and, therefore, of all things).

13. Homer, likewise, knew that gates are sacred, as is evident from his representing Œneus, when supplicating, shaking the gate:

The gates he shakes, and supplicates the son.†

He also knew the gates of the heavens which are committed to the guardianship of the hours; which gates originate in cloudy places, and are opened and shut by the clouds. For he says:

* This fable is mentioned by Plato in the *Phaedrus*, and is beautifully unfolded as follows by Hermias, in his *Scholia* on that Dialogue: "A twofold solution may be given of this fable; one from history, more ethical; but the other, transferring us (from parts) to wholes. And the former of these is as follows: Orithya was the daughter of Erectheus, and the priestess of Boreas; for each of the winds has a presiding deity, which the telestic art, or the art pertaining to sacred mysteries, religiously cultivates. To this Orithya, then, the God was so very propitious, that he sent the north wind for the safety of the country; and besides this, he is said to have assisted the Athenians in their naval battles. Orithya, therefore, becoming enthusiastic, being possessed by her proper God Boreas, and no longer energizing as a human being (for animals cease to energize according to their own peculiarities, when possessed by superior causes), died under the inspiring influence, and thus was said to have been ravished by Boreas. And this is the more ethical explanation of the fable.

"But the second, which transfers the narration to wholes, and does not entirely subvert the former, is the following, for divine fables often employ transactions and histories, in subserviency to the discipline of wholes. It is said then, that Erectheus is the God that rules over the three elements, air, water and earth. Sometimes, however, he is considered as alone the ruler of the earth, and sometimes as the presiding deity of Attica alone. Of this deity Orithya is the daughter; and she is the prolific power of the earth, which is, indeed, co-extended with the word *Erectheus*, as the unfolding of the name signifies, For it is *the prolific power of the earth, flourishing and restored, according to the seasons*. But Boreas is the providence of the Gods, supernally illuminating secondary natures. For the providence of the Gods in the world is signified by Boreas, because this divinity blows from lofty places. And the elevating power of the Gods is signified by the south wind, because this wind blows from low to lofty places; and besides this, *things situated towards the south are more divine*. The providence of the Gods, therefore, causes the prolific power of the earth, or of the Attic land, to *ascend*, and become visible.

"Orithya also may be said to be a soul aspiring after things above. Such a soul, therefore, is ravished by Boreas supernally blowing. But if Orithya was hurled from a precipice, this also is appropriate, for such a soul dies a philosophic, not receiving a physical death, and abandons a life pertaining to her own deliberate choice at the same time that she lives a physical life. And philosophy, according to Socrates in the *Phaedo*, is nothing else than a meditation of death."

† *Iliad*, lib. xi., v. 579.

Whether dense clouds they close, or wide unfold.*

And on this account these gates omit a bellowing sound, because thunders roar through the clouds :

Heaven's gates spontaneous open to the powers;
Heaven's bellowing portals, guarded by the Hours.†

He likewise elsewhere speaks of the gates of the Sun, signifying by these Cancer and Capricorn, for the Sun proceeds as far as to these signs, when he descends from the north to the south, and from thence ascends again to the northern parts. Bnt Capricorn and Cancer are situated about the galaxy, being allotted the extremities of this circle; Cancer indeed the northern, but Capricorn the southern extremity of it. According to Pythagoras, also, *the people of dreams*‡ are the souls which are said to be collected in the galaxy, this circle being so called from the milk with which souls are nourished when they fall into generation. Hence, those who evocate departed souls, sacrifice to them by a libation of milk mingled with honey; because, through the allurements of sweetness they will proceed into generation: with the birth of man, milk being naturally produced. Farther still, the southern regions produce small bodies; for it is usual with heat to attenuate them in the greatest degree. But all bodies generated in the north are large, as is evident in the Celtae, the Thracians and the Scythians; and these regions are humid, and abound with pastures. For the word Boreas is derived from Βορα, which signifies nutriment. Hence, also, the wind which blows from a land abounding in nutriment, is called Βορρας, as being of a nutritive nature. From these causes, therefore, the northern parts are adapted to the mortal tribe, and to souls that fall into the realms of generation. But the southern parts are adapted to that which is immortal¶, just as the eastern parts of the world are attributed to the Gods, but the western to dæmons. For, in consequence of nature originating from diversity, the ancients everywhere made that which has a twofold entrance to be a symbol of the nature of things. For the progression is either through that which is intelligible or through that which is sensible. And if through that which is sensible, it is either through the sphere of the fixed stars, or through the sphere of the planets. And again, it is either through an immortal, or through a mortal progression. One centre likewise is above, but the other beneath the earth; and the one is eastern, but the other western. Thus, too, some parts of the

* *Iliad*, lib. viii., v. 395.

† *Iliad*, lib. viii., v. 393.

‡ The souls of the suitors are said by Homer in the 24th book of the *Odyssey* (v. 11) to have passed, in their descent to the region of spirits, beyond *the people of dreams*.

¶ Hence, the southern have always been more favourable to genius, than the northern parts of the earth.

world are situated on the left, but others on the right hand; and night is opposed to day. On this account, also, harmony consists of and *proceeds* through contraries. Plato also says that there are two openings* one of which affords a passage to souls ascending to the heavens, but the other to souls descending to the earth. And according to theologists, the Sun and Moon are the gates of souls, which ascend through the Sun, and descend through the Moon. With Homer likewise, there are two tubs,

> "From which the lot of every one he fills,
> Blessings to these, to those distributes ills."†

But Plato in the *Gorgias* by tubs intends to signify souls, some of which are malefic, but others beneficent, and some which are rational; but others irrational.‡ Souls, however, are (analogous to) tubs, because they contain in themselves energies and habits, as in a vessel. In Hesiod, too, we find one tub closed, but the other opened by Pleasure, who scatters its contents everywhere, Hope alone remaining behind. For in those things in which a depraved soul, being dispersed about matter, deserts the proper order of

* See my translation of the tenth book of his *Republic*.

† *Iliad*, xiv., v. 528.

‡ The passage in the *Gorgias* of Plato, to which Porphyry here alludes, is as follows:—"Soc.: But, indeed, as you also say, life is a grievous thing. For I should not wonder if Euripides spoke the truth when he says: 'Who knows whether to live is not to die, and to die is not to live?' And we perhaps are in reality dead. For I have heard from one of the wise that we are now dead, and that the body is our sepulchre; but that the part of the soul in which the desires are contained, is of such a nature that it can be persuaded and hurled upwards and downwards. Hence a certain elegant man, perhaps a Sicilian, or an Italian, denominated, mythologizing, this part of the soul a tub, by a derivation from the probable and persuasive; and, likewise he called those that are stupid or deprived of intellect, uninitiated. He farther said that the intemperate and uncovered nature of that part of the soul in which the desires are contained, was like a pierced tub, through its insatiable greediness."

What is here said by Plato is beautifully unfolded by Olympiodorus in his MS. Commentary on the *Gorgias*, as follows:—"Euripides (in *Phryxo*) says, that to live is to die, and to die to live. For the soul coming hither as she imparts life to the body, so she partakes (through this) of a certain privation of life, because the body becomes the source of evils. And hence, it is necessary to subdue the body.

"But the meaning of the Pythagoric fable which is here introduced by Plato, is this: We are said to be dead, because as we have before observed, we partake of a privation of life. The sepulchre which we carry about with us is, as Plato himself explains it, the body. But Hades is the unapparent, because we are situated in obscurity, the soul being in a state of servitude to the body. The tubs are the desires; whether they are so called from our hastening to fill them as if they were tubs, or from desire persuading us that it is beautiful. The initiated, therefore, *i.e.*, those that have a perfect knowledge pour into the entire tub, for these have their tub full; or in other words, have perfect virtue. But the uninitiated, viz., those that possess nothing perfect, have perforated tubs. For those that are in a state of servitude to desire always wish to fill it, and are more inflamed, and on this account they have perforated tubs, as being never full. But the sieve is the rational soul mingled with the irrational. For the (rational) soul is called a circle, because it seeks itself, and is itself sought, finds itself and is itself found. But the irrational soul imitates a right line, since it does not revert to itself like a circle. So far, therefore, as the sieve is circular, it is an image of the rational soul; but, as it is placed under the right lines formed from the holes, it is assumed for the irrational soul. Right lines, therefore, are in the middle of the cavities. Hence, by the sieve, Plato signifies the rational in subjection to the irrational soul. But the water is the flux of Nature; for as Heraclitus says: *moisture is the death of the soul*."

In this extract the intelligent reader will easily perceive that the occult signification of the *tubs* is more scientifically unfolded by Olympiodorus than by Porphyry.

its essence, in all these it is accustomed to feed itself with (the pleasing prospects of) auspicious hope.

14. Since, therefore, every twofold entrance is a symbol of nature, this Homeric cavern has, very properly, not one portal only, but two gates, which differ from each other conformably to things themselves; of which one pertains to Gods and good (dæmons), but the other to mortals and depraved natures. Hence Plato took occasion to speak of bowls, and assumes tubs instead of amphoræ, and two openings, as we have already observed, instead of two gates. Pherecydes Syrus also mentions recesses and trenches, caverns, doors and gates: and through these obscurely indicates the generations of souls, and their separation from these material realms. And thus much for an explanation of the Homeric cave, which we think we have sufficiently unfolded without adducing any farther testimonies from ancient philosophers and theologists, which would give a needless extent to our discourse.

15. One particular, however, remains to be explained, and that is the symbol of the olive planted at the top of the cavern, since Homer appears to indicate something very admirable by giving it such a position. For he does not merely say that an olive grows in this place, but that it flourishes on the summit of the cavern.

> "High at the head a branching olive grows,
> Beneath, a gloomy grotto's cool recess."

But the growth of the ὄlive in such a situation is not fortuitous, as some one may suspect, but contains the enigma of the cavern. For since the world was not produced rashly and casually, but is the work of divine wisdom and an intellectual nature; hence an olive, the symbol of this wisdom, flourishes near the present cavern, which is an image of the world. For the olive is the plant of Minerva, and Minerva is wisdom. But this Goddess being produced from the head of Jupiter, the theologist has discovered an appropriate place for the olive by consecrating it at the summit of the port; signifying by this that the universe is not the effect of a casual event and the work of irrational fortune, but that it is the offspring of an intellectual nature and divine wisdom, which is separated indeed from it (by a difference of essence), but yet is near to it, through being established on the summit of the whole port (*i.e.*, from the dignity and excellence of its nature governing the whole with consummate wisdom). Since, however, an olive is ever-flourishing, it possesses a certain peculiarity in the highest degree adapted to the revolutions of souls in the world, for to such souls this cave (as we have said) is sacred. For in summer the white leaves of the olive tend upwards, but in winter the whiter leaves are bent downward. On this account also in prayers and supplications, men extend the branches of an olive, ominating from this that they

shall exchange the sorrowful darkness of danger for the fair light of security and peace. The olive, therefore, being naturally ever-flourishing, bears fruit which is the auxiliary of labour (by being its reward); it is sacred to Minerva; supplies the victors in athletic labours with crowns; and affords a friendly branch to the suppliant petitioner. Thus, too, the world is governed by an intellectual nature, and is conducted by a wisdom eternal and ever-flourishing; by which the rewards of victory are conferred on the conquerors in the athletic race of life, as the reward of severe toil and patient perseverance. And the Demiurgus who connects and contains the world (in ineffable comprehensions) invigorates miserable and suppliant souls.

16. In this cave, therefore, says Homer, all external possessions mus be deposited. Here, naked, and assuming a suppliant habit, afflicted in body, casting aside everything superfluous, and being averse to the energies of sense, it is requisite to sit at the foot of the olive and consult with Minerva by what means we may most effectually destroy that hostile rout of passions which insidiously lurk in the secret recesses of the soul. Indeed, as it appears to me, it was not without reason that Numenius and his followers thought the person of Ulysses in the *Odyssey* represented to us a man, who passes in a regular manner over the dark and stormy sea of generation, and thus at length arrives at that region where tempests and seas are unknown, and finds a nation

"Who ne'er knew salt, or heard the billows roar."

17. Again, according to Plato, the deep, the sea, and a tempest are images of a material nature. And on this account I think the poet called the port by the name of Phorcys. For he says, "It is the port of the ancient marine Phorcys."* The daughter likewise of this God is mentioned in the beginning of the *Odyssey*. But from Thoosa the Cyclops was born, whom Ulysses deprived of sight. And this deed of Ulysses became the occasion of reminding him of his errors, till he was safely landed in his native country. On this account too, a seat under the olive is proper to Ulysses, as to one who implores divinity and would appease his natal dæmon with a suppliant branch. For it will not be simply, and in a concise way, possible for any one to be liberated from this sensible life, who blinds this dæmon, and renders his energies inefficacious; but he

* Phorcys is one among the ennead of Gods who, according to Plato in the *Timæus*, fabricate generation. Of this deity Proclus observes, "that as the Jupiter in this ennead causes the unapparent divisions and separations of forms made by Saturn to become apparent, and as Rhea calls them forth into motion and generation, so Phorcys inserts them in matter, produces sensible natures, and adorns the visible essence in order that there may not only be divisions of productive principles (or forms) in natures and in souls, and in intellectual essences prior to these, *but likewise in sensibles. For this is the peculiarity of fabrication.*"

who dares to do this, will be pursued by the anger* of the marine and material Gods, whom it is first requisite to appease by sacrifices, labours, and patient endurance; at one time, indeed, contending with the passions, and at another employing enchantments and deceptions, and by these, transforming himself in an all-various manner; in order that, being at length divested of the torn garments (by which his true person was concealed) he may recover the ruined empire of his soul. Nor will he even then be liberated from labours; but this will be effected when he has entirely passed over the raging sea, and, though still living, becomes so ignorant of marine and material works (through deep attention to intelligible concern) as to mistake an oar for a corn-van.

18. It must not, however, be thought that interpretations of this kind are forced, and nothing more than the conjectures of ingenious men; but when we consider the great wisdom of antiquity and how much Homer excelled in intellectual prudence, and in an accurate knowledge of every virtue, it must not be denied that he has obscurely indicated the images of things of a more divine nature in the fiction of a fable. For it would not have been possible to devise the whole of this hypothesis unless the figment had been transferred (to an appropriate meaning) from certain established truths. But reserving the discussion of this for another treatise, we shall here finish our explanation of the present Cave of the Nymphs.

* "The anger of the Gods," says Proclus, "is not an indication of any passion in them, but demonstrates our inaptitude to participate of their illuminations."

THE PYTHAGORIC SENTENCES OF DEMOPHILUS.

Request not of the divinity such things as when obtained you cannot preserve; for no gift of divinity can ever be taken away; and on this account he does not confer that which you are unable to retain.

Be vigilant in your intellectual part; for sleep about this has an affinity with real death.

Divinity sends evil to men, not as being influenced by anger, but for the sake of purification; for anger is foreign from divinity, since it arises from circumstances taking place contrary to the will: but nothing contrary to the will can happen to a god.

When you deliberate whether or not you shall injure another, you will previously suffer the evil yourself which you intended to commit: but neither must you expect any good from the evil; for the manners of everyone are correspondent to his life and actions: for every soul is a repository; that which is good, of things good, and that which is evil, of things depraved.

After long consultation, engage either in speaking or acting; for you have not the ability to recall either your discourses or deeds.

Divinity does not principally esteem the tongue, but the deeds of the wise; for a wise man, even when he is silent, honours divinity.

A loquacious and ignorant man, both in prayer and sacrifice, contaminates a divine nature: the wise man therefore is alone a priest, is alone the friend of divinity, and only knows how to pray.

It is impossible to receive from divinity any gift greater than virtue.*

Gifts and victims confer no honour on the divinity, nor is he adorned with offerings suspended in temples; but a soul divinely inspired, solidly conjoins us with divinity; for it is necessary that like should approach to like.

It is more painful to be subservient to passions than to tyrants themselves.

It is better to converse more with yourself than with others.

If you are always careful to remember, that in whatever place either your soul or body accomplishes any deed, divinity is present as an inspector of your conduct; in all your discourses and actions you will venerate

* Because virtue is the perfection of life, and the proper perfection of any being is the felicity of that being.

the presence of an inspector from whom nothing can be concealed, and will at the same time possess divinity as an intimate associate.

Believe that you are furious and insane, in proportion as you are ignorant of yourself.

It is necessary to search for those wives and children which will remain after a liberation from the present life.

The self-sufficient and needy philosopher lives a life truly similar to divinity, and considers the non-possession of external and unnecessary goods as the greatest wealth; for the acquisition of riches sometimes inflames desire; but not to act in any respect unjustly is sufficient to the enjoyment of a blessed life.

True goods are never produced by indolent habits.

Esteem that to be eminently good, which, when communicated to another, will be increased to yourself.*

Esteem those to be eminently your friends, who assist your soul rather than your body.

Consider both the praise and reproach of every foolish person as ridiculous, and the whole life of an ignorant man as a disgrace.

Endeavour that your familiars may reverence rather than fear you; for love attends upon reverence, but hatred upon fear.

The sacrifices of fools are the aliment of the fire; but the offerings which they suspend in temples are the supplies of the sacrilege.

Understand that no dissimulation can be long concealed.

The unjust man suffers greater evil while his soul is tormented with a consciousness of guilt, than when his body is scourged with whips.

It is by no means safe to discourse concerning divinity with men of false opinions; for the danger is equally great in speaking to such as these, things either fallacious or true.

By everywhere using reason as your guide, you will avoid the commission of crimes.

By being troublesome to others, you will not easily escape molestation yourself.

Consider that as great erudition, through which you are able to bear the want of erudition in the ignorant.

He who is depraved does not listen to the divine law; and on this account lives without law.

* And this is the case with intellectual goods.

A just man, who is a stranger, is not only superior to a citizen, but is even more excellent than a relation.

As many passions of the soul, so many fierce and savage despots.

No one is free who has not obtained the empire of himself.

Labour, together with continence, precedes the acquisition of every good.

Be persuaded that those things are not your riches which you do not possess in the penetralia of cogitation.

Do that which you judge to be beautiful and honest, though you should acquire no glory from the performance ; for the vulgar is a depraved judge of beautiful deeds.

Make trial of a man rather from his deeds than his discourses ; for many live badly and speak well.

Perform great things, at the same time promising nothing great.

Since the roots of our natures are established in divinity, from which also we are produced, we should tenaciously adhere to our root ; for streams also of water, and other offspring of the earth, when their roots are cut off become rotten and dry.

The strength of the soul is temperance ; for this is the light of a soul destitute of passions: but it is much better to die than to darken the soul through the intemperance of the body.

He is a wise man, and beloved by divinity, who studies how to labour for the good of his soul, as much as others labour for the sake of the body.

Yield all things to their kindred and ruling nature except liberty.

Learn how to produce eternal children, not such as may supply the wants of the body in old age, but such as may nourish the soul with perpetual food.

It is impossible that the same person can be *a lover of pleasure*, *a lover of body*, *a lover of riches*, and *a lover of divinity :* for a lover of pleasure is also a lover of body ; but a lover of body is entirely a lover of riches ; but a lover of riches is necessarily unjust ; and the unjust is necessarily profane towards divinity, and lawless with respect to men. Hence, though he should sacrifice hecatombs, he is only by this means the more impious, unholy, atheistical, and sacrilegious with respect to his intention: and on this account it is necessary to avoid every lover of pleasure as an atheist and polluted person.

The divinity has not a place in the earth more allied to his nature than a pure and holy soul.

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DEVACHAN.

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DEVACHAN is the current of the states of feeling that sets in, when the self, freed by death from the body and from the desires that are concerned with the body, rests from pain. It is not a cessation of activity, but an enhancement of the highest activities that prevail on earth. It is not a cessation of desires, but their sublimation and realization. The current of consciousness in Devachan flows nearer to all realities than embodied consciousness; its life and thought is a higher life, a deeper thought, a more real action, than any that obtains here. Our conceptions of it rest, too, entirely on its aspect as an illusion, and consequently our teachings about it to beginners are tinctured too much with half-conscious apology, as if we felt that here was a weak point. We must renounce this flavour of apology, for, if it is necessary, then our presentation is faulty; we must stop depicting life in Devachan as a process of castle-building in the air on an immense scale. In a universe whose purpose is the evolution of mind and of wisdom in mind there can be no such elaborated arrangement for extensive waste of time. Periodically mind descends into the life of terrestrial matter to gain experience there; periodically it ascends to the highest level now possible to it to ripen and add to that experience. Although this ripening is as involuntary as the growth of a flower or a child it is none the less real; and as it is the result of self-examination and the conscious contemplation of experience here on earth, these processes may be voluntarily and wisely pursued on a far greater scale in Devachan. If all our ways of thinking were not so materialistic at the core, we should never have conceived of Devachan as a place or state where there is no real action, but only the effortless and profitless retrospection of an advanced senility; at best "only thought," as if thought was not action, or as if there were any other action than thought. That to which we restrict the word "life" in ordinary speech, is the current of the states of consciousness that flows for each of us on this plane of being, states the overwhelming majority of which are concerned with the data of the physical senses. Contrasted with the life of Devachan it is a slow and a muddy current. The states are threaded upon two strands of feeling—the feeling of the impact of physical sensation, to speak loosely, and the feeling of the impact of quite higher sensation from the spiritual being of nature and our fellows. Desire alternating towards one and the other, causes action with the object of getting more of one or the other, and causes attention and thought upon either. For the physical group we have elaborate names, upon them are built systems of so-called psychology,

and their relations are in some degree known to all. Of that other group, those which receive their essential development in Devachan, we have no definite knowledge or classification; to our minds they form a vague unpatterned cloud, and they are rarely determinedly sought after and encouraged as are the others. The antithesis which makes of this the world of causes, and of Devachan that of effects, is misleading, misleading because resting on part of a truth; for an effect is the product of all the forces that have preceded it. Lives on earth and in Devachan follow each other. It is only part of the forces generated on earth that can find their field of activity in Devachan, the remainder have to wait the succeeding earth life; and there are forces generated in Devachan which have their effects in the period of embodiment. The life in Devachan and the embodied life are alternately cause and effect, and the former more nearly approaches the ultimate reality. Most of our terrestrial occupations have no scope in Devachan, and there are some, which here we pursue haltingly, that find there ideally fit conditions. Life in the early and descending races must have been wholly of the latter nature, as a state following upon and inferior to life wholly spiritual; whilst that to which the term "life" is now almost exclusively applied is again the next step lower, a set of short and disagreeable interludes to it, constituting a temporary phase in human history, necessary to establish our complete self-consciousness and to complete our understanding of nature, yet excrescent upon real life.

So if, as we ought, we regard each man as a mind, dipped into matter or the understanding of it, and clothed with that specially evolved form of matter that constitutes his body, then we must take this at least bipartite nature into consideration. Mind is a creative, potent, spiritual unit, and the spiritual aspect is its primary and proper one. But mind embodied on earth as the man of to-day is thereby reduced in its spiritual and creative aspects to a minimum. While it regards itself as body, saying, "*I* am hungry," it cannot perform its high function of creation, becoming a passive sharer in the sensations of matter, whose waves flow as an undiminished river of sensation across the field of its consciousness. Absorbed with this, it cannot really be regarded as active at all. The true work for which mind should now exert itself is the creation of the thought forms and forces that shall move on and guide the life and growth, and be the pattern for many a future world.

And between mind thus nobly active, and mind tossing passively upon the crest of the waves of matter, there is a blended state where the spiritual predominates, that of Devachan, wherein, availing ourselves somewhat of our spiritual birthright of power, we are yet hampered by the finer underlayers of the thick garment of matter which we wore in the

life just passed, and by those memories of it into whose forms we must condition our new and higher experiences. It seems almost axiomatic that any conception of Devachan which, after full contemplation, does not minimize or destroy our fear of death, is false. Fear of death has root in two sources; in that materialism of soul that cannot conceive of life without a physical body or as other than physical life, and in the dread of the sufferings of the dying body. To the former group belong in some degree those who, thinking that they have an assured faith in life hereafter and even now the peace born of that faith, do yet, in a deeper mental place and one concealed partly from themselves, conceive of that future life as utterly severed from the thread of this present, from its work, its ties, its companions, its human consciousness.

So, deeper than faith, hidden over, may be dread and the negation of faith; and faith itself may rise and fall with the moods of the body, till we learn to make a faith in the heart and fix it as we fix a photograph. If we Theosophists take no steps to success in this we had better cease to try and teach. For though the strong and sustained conception of death as the benediction of nature upon whatever may be good in us does not at once prove the destroyer of fear, if it does not ultimately succeed in doing so it shows its falsity. Let us try to arrive at a true conception of death, of the stages that follow, and of Devachan, and then, dwelling constantly, yet not morbidly thereon, do away with conscious and unconscious fear, both for ourselves and others. This fear is already dead when we have for an instant realized what it is that dies, when we have intently watched a pain and found it to be entirely of the body and distinct from our watching self, which always survives, when we have imagined the whole body as dead, and found no change in the self once we had got clear of the shock of the severance from bodily sensations. Such imaginings help the change called death, when it comes, and make it easier. The good of the Self is neither mortal nor can it change. The fear of death is the shadow cast upon us by the thickening veils of matter. We pay that price for our knowledge of matter in embodiment. Of matter, man in his early days ages ago knew nothing, for his consciousness was too high, too spiritual to be affected by matter, to get from contact with matter any sensations whatever. Matter, for him, did not exist. So, as he had no vestures to put off, death did not exist either; his life was an unchanging thread. But as he developed consciousness of the presence of matter, and especially of that matter which, gathering about him, formed his body, he gradually lost touch of the spiritual life, and came to live more and more the life of his body.

Now we have almost lost the power of forming a conception of spiritual life; to refer to it under that term is to sum up, in the concep-

tions of those who hear it, all the infinite complexity, continual changes, and interplay of currents between our own heart and that of nature and our fellows, which that life really involves, into a vague feeling of piety; it seems to most of us as if we were born, lived and died, with the body. We cannot have consciousness fully in two states at once, and so the soul, immersed in the sensations of body, in its pains and pleasures and desires, forgot that it was an eternal thread of life, periodically embodied and periodically freed, has forgotten, therefore, the line of its incarnations, and figured for itself one eternal heaven or hell after one short life. Now even that poor picture is departed or departing, and nothing disturbs our absolute association with the body and its changes.

We view human life as a "discreditable episode in the history of the planet," and human consciousness as a casually evolved, quickly evanescent item among the sparks thrown off by the unconscious rotation of the wheel of matter. To some there yet remains a sort of semi-intellectual conviction, or a hope dignified by the name of "surety," that life remains after the death of the body, but it is very imperfect. It fails to save from fear of death; at best they are "resigned" to that which to them is theoretically, and only theoretically, liberation; it is a hope, a faith, a trust, not a knowledge in the complete sense that the present life is a knowledge. "God forbid!" said the bishop piously, when the ship's captain prophesied that in half an hour they would all be in heaven. Yet such knowledge is within our grasp; it is within the power and right of the soul.

Theosophists who lecture in public are often called upon by someone who sincerely disbelieves it, to prove to him that his consciousness can exist apart from his body, and though he might, with equal intelligence, require proof that he can love his mother, still such a man is a sign of the age, and it is beyond the capacities of his consciousness to understand that it is possible for the mind so to disentangle itself from the bodily sensations as to cease to regard them as a part of itself, to compel them to become, as it were, subjectively objective, like a toothache when one is half awake, and as a final voluntary step to gain power to sever temporarily all connection with them, and thus to gain freedom.

To understand it theoretically we should study how at birth the veils of matter gather one by one about the soul; how as it becomes conscious of sensation its consciousness of its real being and selfhood becomes dimmed and goes out; how the transitional gulf is crossed and how it emerges on the shore of matter to gain there that other consciousness of selfhood in body which is the disturbed reflection of the first. Then, entangled in the net of terrestrial life, it moves heavily across the stage to that dreaded point called death, whereat there is reversal of all this and revival of proper being. Some make a great difficulty of the abrupt

chasm between the high and penetrating consciousness of some great ego in Devachan and the consciousness of the same ego in the early months and years of life. They have not reckoned at their full weight the iron bonds of bodily sensation. In the Psychical Research reports (part 25), is an account by Professor Ramsay of his sensations, or rather of his subjective condition when *partly* anæsthetized. He says:

"I do not think that I am a follower o Bishop Berkeley in my ordinary every-day existence; my tendency of mind is . . . a condition of scientific scepticism. But under the influence of an anæsthetic all doubts vanish; I *know* the truth of Berkeley's theory of existence.

"It is as if the veil which hides whence we come, what we are, and what will become of us, were suddenly rent, and as if a glimpse of the Absolute burst upon us.

"An overwhelming impression forced itself upon me that the state in which I then was, was reality; that now I had reached the true solution of the riddle of the Universe . . . that all outside objects were merely passing reflections on the eternal mirror of my mind."

With him, as with Sir Humphrey Davy, there was the vivid conception of the ideal foundation of the universe; he records also his immediate knowledge of his individual eternity; and in the case of both, the subsidence of these conditions of consciousness on the cessation of anæsthesia and return to bodily sensation left them on their ordinary mental plane. This is the experience of most of us, save that we usually retain less, often only an impression of having gone through an immensity of experience. In the case of those who have not, while in full bodily consciousness, freed themselves from the ties of it, the transition from the swift, relatively timeless, freed, vivid, Devachanic consciousness, down to the place in which consciousness is a prey to the enormous volume and sustained flow of the myriad currents of sensation from *every* cell in the body, is too great for memory, the gulf is too wide and deep. Probably every cell appeals to consciousness continuously in waking life, as every leaf in a forest contributes something to the sound which we hear, but which becomes inaudible by reason of its continuity. Whilst feeling continuously all the cells, and whilst being subconsciously attentive to and tethered by them, we only notice an occasional few that are in pain or hungry, that is, that rise above the level surface of the others. Amidst all this the ego loses his self-consciousness, cannot think of himself as self in the whirl of myriads of simultaneous sensations; and disappearing infancy is the advancing power of disregarding these or taking them in mass, as a man neglects the continuous roar of a crowd to hear his friend's voice. This power slowly begins to allow of his regaining self-consciousness and the power of abstracted thought.

How then does the man in Devachan differ from the same man on earth? How does he stand towards friends remaining on earth and towards others contemporaneously in Devachan? We must give up making false differences between the dweller in Devachan and the terrestrial man. Secretly we picture the man on earth as standing open-eyed in the reality of life, practically and actually dealing with real men and things; and the man in Devachan as lying dawdling away a long millenium, dreaming in the paradise of an untrammelled fancy, useless to humanity, shielded from the cold winds of reality, a lazy summer morning's reverie a kalpa long.

Two men look at a cornfield, ripe for the reapers. One is reckoning its value in bushels, and to him it represents this or that figure on a cheque. The other watches the sunlight on the sea of waving stalks, and the feeling of its beauty wakes within him. Both men will apply to it the name of cornfield, but they refer to two totally different things.

Or there is a measured tapping of hammers on wires. To one man it is an offensive mechanical rattling, to another it is high music. Which is true? Certainly the hammers tap the strings; the strings rapidly vibrate and so the adjacent particles of air and finally the ear-drums of the listeners. None of this is sound, for sound is the form into which consciousness is thrown when solid objects touch each other smartly. This touch is the first thing; it may be regarded for our present purpose as truly objective; but it is not sound; an observing consciousness stimulated by its being aware that two objects have touched, creates in itself the sound; and that is the second thing; the consciousness may be that of a lizard, a cat, or a man, but in it and of it is the sound, not in nature, who presents only the touch. But the regulated touch of hammers upon stretched wires becomes to man or to most men not only sound, but music; a very complex state of feeling, though the sound is so simple a state as to be possible to the consciousness of an animal. To put it somewhat more carefully, the touch of the hammers on wires serves as an incitement to an observing sensuous consciousness to create sound within itself; the presence of sound in the outer, astral, sensuous consciousness serves as an incitement to the inner, spiritual knowing consciousness of a man to create within itself music. But both music and sound may be created by the two orders of consciousness in man without any stimulus from objective nature. Neither music nor sound are in nature, where are only smart contacts; they are the creations of consciousness, whilst the former, the creation of music, requires human consciousness, being beyond the range of the animal as that of sound is beyond the range of the tree. Music is an extremely elaborate dress which we weave to clothe and make beautiful the

bare sound, which in its turn is the simpler preliminary dress for the most naked datum of cognition.

An eye perceives vibrations in ether; a mind interprets those vibrations into terms of itself, creates the colour green upon the reception of that stimulus, and we say the leaf is green, which is not true. An artistic soul will create within the feeling green the further feeling beautiful. But neither green nor beauty exist in nature, where are only vibrations and contacts. Around these naked skeletons, we, the conscious selves, create the rest. What is for us reality save ourselves? The form, the colour, the sound, the beauty of nature, are our creations, furnished from the essence of our conscious being, and we are the reality. None of these powers of creation are lost at death, and the creations of the soul in Devachan are no less real than those of the same soul on earth. What is true for this plane is true for Devachan. Its substance, on the upper levels of the ether, presents for us vibration and movement as does physical substance here, for in both is the throb of the one life. What we do here we do there, only far more perfectly, creating around those vibrations sensation and feeling, form, colour, beauty. And all is more real on higher, serener, intenser levels.

Let us for the time pass on from this, enquiring now, if we can, what other aspects of life on earth are also possible or certain hereafter? What of friends? what of our work? does death shut off friends and work, supplying us with phantoms for the one and lazy dreaming for the other? We cognize acquaintances and friends in ways parallel with our cognition of nature. We are tripartite, physical, astral, and spiritual, or receptive, sensational and noetic; and we saw that common astral sensation is a subjective creation around a physical reception, that a bare physical reception does not become a sensation till it has left the physical plane and been received into the complex framework of astral subjectivity, upon which in its turn the spiritual is added. So each of the three parts deal with nature. Upon the physical sense-organ falls the bare touch of nature, the contact, the vibration. This passes into the sensitive astral, instinct with the sensation-consciousness, and there the physical touch becomes sensation, sensation of form, of colour, of sound, and the rest. Then the spiritual man takes it perhaps, and these sensations are made to serve as the foundation of the feeling of beauty. In dealing with our fellow-men, the tripartite nature is similarly active, though on somewhat other levels. Corresponding with physical contact, we have the appreciation of the fact of the presence and outer doings of our fellows. Corresponding with astral sensation, we perceive that their acts affect us favourably or otherwise with respect to our personal welfare, pleasantly or otherwise. The judgment is from the standpoint of selfish-

ness, and is only concerned with them so far as their acts subserve our particular interests. Corresponding with spiritual feeling is our perception of our fellows as egos, the feeling of them as friends, not merely acquaintances—for friendship when real is of the spiritual nature. It has its outward occasion or inciting cause in the bodily presence and acts of the friend, as the feeling of music has its outward occasion in sound, but, like music, it is our own creation, the creation of our spiritual nature, of that spiritual centre in us which is not in this or that spot of space, which finds its food and incitements in music, in all beauty, in friendship, in love, in philosophy, in religion, which, one excited, sleeps not more. Drawn into the activity of friendship, by the presence of him who is thereafter our friend, it remains active; and that feeling of our friend which becomes manifested to the lower consciousness as the thought about the friend is a permanent current passing on the inner planes of being between the two. In former lives we may have made the link, as we may have developed music, and they continue always in our inner and properly ethereal being ; in this life they do not manifest themselves to the outer consciousness till excited by the outer cause, the friend's new presence or the musical instrument. Without this exciting cause, our new outer consciousness, full of the body and its instruments and the personal interests. has not had its attention called to what has continued within it, as a Londoner does not hear the city-roar till reminded by his country cousin. Nevertheless it may, once struck, have continued unbroken right across many lives and their intervals of rest. In and with this lives the self of the dweller in Devachan. If it be asked how friendship and how music arose at first, we must answer that both are reminiscences of the time far back when all humanity was spiritual only, and that our spiritual selves yet remaining in unison within are obscured and walled about from one another by their bodies and the rush of personal feelings that body has engendered. We may have many friends, real friends, and the quality of feeling we maintain for each of them is different—not necessarily different in degree, for all may be equally close, but in kind, so that our central being epitomizes our friends just as the germ-cell has been supposed to contain adequate sample of all the other separate cells of the body. Such feeling, once aroused, does not depend on their acts, for they may never be able to do us a service; they may, on the contrary, need unintermittent service from us. If they do us acts of service that may confuse the issue, for, whilst hardly affecting the true spiritual feeling of friendship, which is independent of all outward acts, it gratifies the lower selfish personal nature. They may even, misled by their own lower nature, do unkindly things and thus offend our selfishness, unless we can separate the higher from the lower, and, disregarding the latter, hold only in view the former

—having, though we cannot see it, a sort of dogged faith in its existence and thus waiting quietly and forgivingly till the clouds of the lower man roll off. To make a friend in the real sense is to recognize or feel the inner ego of another. To recognize even in a little degree the ego of another through the veils of its body and personal consciousness, is to make or find a friend. And where in life this process is only slightly begun, in Devachan it will ripen into perfect bloom, just as in the night we solve our problems with clearer vision. And just as we wake in the morning, and find that we have by means of some forgotten or half-remembered "dreams" come to know and strongly like someone who the night before was barely an acquaintance, so in the succeeding life we meet recognizingly one who in Devachan has become a friend, though that "dream" is forgotten wholly unless the survived feeling be counted memory. The inner feeling of friendship, different in kind for each friend, is knowledge of that friend, it is his inner light shining direct into our crypt, it is his very self. That is the ultimate purpose of life on earth, that each of us shall reflect in himself, shall feel in himself the inner being of every other, shall know, shall be utter friend to every other.

Acquaintance is of the lower, astral, sensational, merely cognizing nature, and is pleasant or unpleasant according as the acquaintance furthers or hinders our personal interests in life.

Friendship is of the feeling spiritual nature. Pushing research inwards, we shall find that our feeling of our friend is in the same inner place and of the same essence as our innermost perception of self-being. It is of less immediate intensity than that, because we are not perfect friends. We know our friends by the same light of consciousness as we know ourselves, not intellectually but nearer home. Our feeling of essential self-existence is of the same kind and on the same plane as our feeling of our friend's self-existence. It is really the Great Self reflected in two mirrors, the causal vestures, two rays of the same golden sun. On the highest planes of being and consciousness, those corresponding with deep sleep and with the initial and ultimate states of humanity, all selves are thus united, all possess and feel each other. But that is not enough for nature. She would have that fire of love shine into all stages of our being, and again and again she brings us in varying assemblages upon earth, that amid the separateness of body, amid the conflictions of personal interests, we may regain that perfect unity. Thus in degree we already know and feel our friend as we know and feel ourselves, two states of the same feeling, one act of knowledge in the inner. Only, as I said, this knowledge of another, though it survives centuries of separation, though it is eternal, may yet be dimmed time and again by the conflicting selfish natures of the outer man, who through the smoke of that conflict cannot see the

small spark of their friendship, perhaps struck alight ages ago, never to go out. So nature will see to it that in associated lives on earth they wear out at last the hates and conflicts of the lower man; for the enemy with whom now painfully we are associated in hate may be him to whom once we took vows of friendship. Hate has within it the fire of its own destruction, for it becomes more and more painful and more and more fatal to all the pleasures as the man accumulates lives and experiences.

The body dies at last, and with its death dissipates that centre of desires for whose gratification a body is necessary, and in whose activities the higher aspects of consciousness cannot share. You cannot at the same time desire a gratification of the body and one of the spirit, to please the palate with a savour and to be lost in symphonic harmonies. So, as the egos of the yet spiritual humanity became increasingly aware of, and then desirous of, the touch of matter upon their vestures, they lost their spirituality. Gradually they translated the touch of external matter upon that matter which was their bodies into terms of the five senses, colour, taste, and the rest, always desiring more, even to this day. That desiring thickens the vestures, draws into their texture more and more of the otherwise colourlessly-conscious, atomic, elemental lives in nature, and all these take increasingly the conscious colour of that desire, re-echo it, develop it, and infect the ego, now well into the vicious circle, with ever more and more of it.

Thus in the headquarters of bodily sensation there is set up among the lives an ever-active centre of longing for sensation. Therein sits the ego, lost to spirit, lost to real love, lost to higher feeling. And this kâmic bodily centre of sensation and of longing for sensation, now the home of the ego, makes from the plastic vestures organs of action wherewith it can go to, grasp and experience more fully the objects of sensation, and with practice the senses gain perfection. With these the ego works, taking, like an infant, all his pleasure in their action. Lost in this sensation and this work, he forgets or loses sight of that inner place in his nature that feels, reflects, and, as we say loves, his fellow-egos, forgets that they are egos, regards them only as objective forms that hinder or further the gratification of his own desires. As they, doing likewise, hinder or further this, so in his lower consciousness he makes for them a false hate or an equally false love, changing somewhat with every act they do for or against his interests.

Then is selfishness supreme, lust, gluttony, hate of those who oppose, flattery of them that they may cease to oppose, fear lest they should have more power, ambition to get in front of them, drunkenness (which is only love of pleasant sensation), pride or vanity which is only the feeling of superior power to do or get, love of applause, for applause is the hall-mark of power—in fine, every vice on earth, springing all from love of sensation,

or indirectly from love of the power to get sensation; at root springing from the touch of nature upon the body and its consciousness, and the longing for it. This longing has focalized into a centre of conscious and unconscious desire, having its origination and inseparable home in the bodies, and dissipating after bodily death. By the throb of its own engine of desire the body is at last jarred to pieces. The particles of the physical body go to their places in nature, the constituents of the kâmic centre to theirs, both to gain from the universal magnetic mother a renewal of energy. From them for awhile the ego is freed and at peace. He is satiated for the time with the meal of sensation, and other parts of his nature cry for their satisfaction. If we say that in the peace that follows he dreams, we shall say what is partly right, but we are apt to imply what is almost wholly false. This false implication, fully stated, is that while on earth our friends are real and our consciousness awake, in Devachan our friends are unreal, illusions of our own creation, and our consciousness dreaming.

What is our relation to our friends in earth-life? Bear in mind our triple nature, the spiritual consciousness, the personal consciousness, and the bodily coat. We associate with our friends, and their outer forms with their slight casual daily changes impress themselves upon us, so that our memory becomes charged with the complete set of details, with their forms standing, sitting and engaged in various acts. So also the personal consciousness learns and remembers their outer characters, the general tenor of their acts as affecting in one way or another our personal interests: taking a purely selfish view of them we learn to like or dislike them accordingly as we feel or find that they act for or against our personal interests.

These make up our whole memory of them. But it is to be observed that this, like the green of the leaf, is our creation, the creation of the personal centre. It is true that our friend or acquaintance acts, and that as we observe it, corresponds to bare sensation, the skeleton. But the pleasure or anger that his acts cause is in and of ourselves, our superaddition to the acts, our private creation and personal property, and it is by very much the largest part of our total conception and terrestrial memory of the man. Let this feeling be rigidly separated from the skeleton memory of his form and actual acts—for these latter are real things, existing primarily in him, and having only a secondary and derived existence in us as we observe and unconsciously memorize them. The feelings in us that those acts arouse exist primarily and only in us; they are, as it were, the opinion concerning those acts which is formed by the kâmic personal centre as to whether they will benefit or hinder us in our pursuit of our own welfare.

With the disappearance at death of the kâmic centre, those feelings disappear, and there remains only the bare uncoloured memory of the form and acts—uncoloured that is by personal feeling; coloured, it may be, by spiritual feeling. For if, beyond all personal feeling, the man appeals to us in any degree as a friend, as, to some degree, most men do, we to that extent touch, reflect, know, love, and are hereafter at one with, the real man. Our acquaintance has become spiritual friendship to a greater or less degree (note the qualification, for though this is the case with nearly all men, it is yet very rudimentary), just as the green leaf and the waving gold of the corn have been spiritualized in us into beauty, and the sound has been spiritualized into music. This spiritual memory or conception of the man is equally his creation in us, and our creation in ourselves, and it never dies. Henceforth it modifies our acts favourably to him, tending also to modify his favourably to us. This generates pleasure in the personal centre, and personal affection becomes added to spiritual. In other cases his lower centre may not respond as ours does to the warmth in the upper.

Devachan is not a purely and abstractly spiritual condition, it is personal spirituality. It is the personal with the light of spirit upon it, replacing its own red and lower light. The ego therein is charged with all those memories and conceptions which he generated on earth while the personal centre was active, but he is no longer full of the selfish feelings that clustered about and poisoned his consciousness on earth and dictated so many of his actions and thoughts. Thus the spiritual feeling that sound engendered for him on earth, he endows with the outer accessories that it then arose from, just as a breath of musical feeling passing up from our consciousness in an ordinary dream causes us to create the vision of an orchestra to account for it; though in Devachan, owing to the absence of the discordant and continuous hum of the body and its centres, all is done and felt with a perfection here impossible.

Similarly the spiritual relationship which we establish as friendship on earth with other egos, and which of course persists in the Devachan as a stream of changing feeling of the purest kind, and not merely as the memory of former feeling, goes on under conditions made up of the memories of earth. To remember a feeling is to re-establish it, and so we cannot remember a love without actually making currents reflow to and from the other. Our intercourse, when we are in Devachan with real friends also there or on earth, persists as a continuous interchange of feeling, on those inner planes which to the dweller in Devachan are the essential ones; but he, accustomed while on earth to find that the current of feeling from his friends is associated with the presence of their actual outer forms and acts, now reclothes the inner and still continuing current of inter-

changed feeling with the form of the friends with which those acts were associated on earth, and with acts that were on earth most frequently co-ordinated with them. We can never think of a friend without thinking of his form ; we can never receive from him a transmitted thought or wave of feeling and recognize it without creating in the mind his form. And that form creation is the solitary illusion in Devachan, whilst the continued transmission is the permanent reality.

The spiritual pleasure of friendship on earth is associated with the casual outer acts of our friends, acts meaningless in themselves, little words, journeyings, small doings, mere nothings, save that they express that eternal intercourse of feeling which, once set going, finds in those petty personal deeds and words an embodiment, as a soul is embodied in the earth and water of a brain. Then in the light of heaven, freed from that body and kâmic centre which are alone the hindrance to perfect transference even on earth of thought and feeling, charged with the memory of a million such little deeds, we select a few of them which truly have no longer outward existence, and in this illusion, trifling, transparent though it be, reclothe the continuous and transcendent reality of the intercourse of soul to soul. And because of this little dress we call the whole living Devachan an illusive dream.

So, recasting our conception of Devachan, we see that it is not a cessation of the mind's activity, nor a severance from friends on earth, nor an isolation one from another of those of its tenants who were not isolated on earth. Its activities are somewhat conditioned by the activities that each ego pursued on earth. It is not a cessation of mental activity, for consciousness only truly clears when disentangled from the myriad sensations that come from the densely thronged lives of the body. The synthesis or focal point of these lives is the centre of bodily selfhood, the kâmic centre, dissipated at death, and this is the clog to higher thought and feeling. Sometimes we rise at morning refreshed with the night, with high aspiration and noble feeling, with charity to all, with love to many, like one who has just listened to noble music. Friends seem near, we can feel their thoughts of us, in some inner place we seem to talk to them and hear their words. The mind is high, and the problems of the last few days are difficulties no longer. We make resolutions, strong and distinct, for the conduct of the coming days, Memory widens and travels back through the years, lighting up the dark fields this way and that, so that we see the chain of deeds and their results, those things that have made us what we are ; while the subtle, direct action of the judgment pierces the perplexities that made action so hard and devious, perplexities of right and wrong.

Watch all this fade as the hours and even the minutes go by. When night comes, look back, see what mere bodily existence has entailed, how

the consciousness of the self is the mirror of the body. Moral energy slackened hour by hour; the mental horizon contracted, even to the area of the meal-table; there was resentment for some little injury; irritable words, and their retaliations disturbed serenity; bodily fatigue and hunger occupy consciousness with desire for rest and food; the brain tires, and with it thought. Perhaps pain, recognized or half-conscious, absorbs attention; daily anxiety which sleep had banished, returns again. What makes the gulf between one state and the other, if not the body and the personal bodily centre, hungering, tiring, its nerves on edge, irritable, resenting, hoping and working for its own support and physical comfort, fearing failure, envying the successful, careless of others? This kâmic centre epitomizes for us the resistances of matter and its blind energies to the quickening life of spirit, and it is in spite of these that we have to establish that life; we dip transitorily into matter, throw ourselves into its forces, assimilate them into our consciousness, and then after detachment guide them. For the forces of matter, when taken up into human consciousness, can be guided as to the path of their re-emergence into matter once the ego has ceased to think of them as himself and to be guided and swept about by them.

The atoms of the kâmic centre regather themselves karmically at birth about the reincarnating ego, that the ego may go on disentangling himself painfully from their sway, from the crowded rush of their forces, may subject them to his will; and if, by giving way to their desires and tastes while thinking those desires ours, we let the atomic vitality heap itself up unduly about this or that centre of bodily activity—as, for example, the liver, in giving way to gluttony—that progressive unbalance is the congenital unbalance of the parts and centres of the new body corresponding in this case of the liver), and hence arises disease for which the ego, in the present incarnation, may not be responsible. It is the kâmic centre and its myriad activities in our consciousness that confines us so much, so entirely, to ourselves, so that we fail to share with those about us, their thoughts, their wants, fail to know, to help, to love, their inner selves. It is the one hindrance to the perfect transference of thought from mind to mind, the one hindrance, to the serenity of consciousness, to its maintenance on the planes concerned with friendship, with philosophy, with artistic feeling with the recognition of beauty in forms, in thoughts, in life. It is the one producer of suffering, and that which experiences pain, and from it spring the acts that result in pain.

Lastly, it is this which is absent in Devachan. On earth our minds and memories absorb the pictures of what is outward, of bare forms and forces, the outer pictures of nature and our friends, and these pictures give occasion to thoughts and feelings thereon. These pictures are not the

reality, but only the framework of it. The illusion is the taking of the outer form for the thing itself, of the vibrating wire for the sound and the music; of the form with its dead words and deeds for the living soul of the friend. Doing this, we take an ill-phrased, yet kindly meant, sentence for an insult, and, absorbed in the form of the words, forget to notice or perceive the feeling within, which, though unnoticed, nevertheless exists, and which, if we had observed it, would have told us of the kindly intent. Behind the words soul communicates its feeling to soul, and this continues during life and after death. We think of this feeling, when we think of it at all, as an uneventful, unvarying stream, monotonous, even insipid, mawkish, but it is really as rich, as continuous in its changes, as eventful, as subtly compounded, as the play of brain-thought, and it is characteristic of the age that only the latter is studied, analyzed and known; the former, the thought of the heart, being barely recognized, confused with sentimentality, tearfulness, "piousness"—to say nothing of its conscious development, and use in life. But it is only by doing that, that Devachan can be enriched as a field for growth.

I sit thinking, when suddenly there is a touch, as it were, upon the keyboard of my heart from my friend; I feel him with unexpected fulness and sharpness. Then I translate this feeling into a mental explanation. My mind produces his picture and the sound of his voice. Interpreting the central feeling into very vivid mental objective terms, like the dweller in Devachan, I might think I had had a vision of him, and that he told me he was coming. Interpreting it less vividly I might say I had had a transmitted thought from my friend to the effect that he was coming. In my mental explanation alone is the error, for he is only writing, or talking of me, or thinking of me. Which is the important essence of the drama: the actual warm, living transmission of the feeling which I, unaccustomed, mistranslate; or the outward trumpery words and deeds which he is doing? So after death. I still feel the heart-thought of my friend, which the death or either or both cannot stop, and filled with the vividness of the memory of his form and voice, that memory takes shape before me—a shape that speaks to me words that express the feeling, if words can. If in life I thought more of the feeling of friends than of their words, and developed it, my consciousness in Devachan approaches closer to the reality and is the richer; if, on the other hand, I made the feeling dependent on outward deeds and words, then it is poorer and further from the reality.

So life persists beyond death. In life we love music, for we get from it strange beauties of consciousness. They would last, were it not for the body, its passions and pains. When we have passed out through the gates of the body, they return and endure. Charged with the memories of the forms of life on earth, we create, to explain to ourselves the rapture of

consciousness, the outer sounds that in our life on earth were necessary to give them birth and form, placing friends and music in scenery and associations that form for them a harmonious background and accompaniment. So, when two who were friends on earth are together in heaven, the transfer and intercommunion of feeling and of felt thought continues, each making for the other such objective pictures and scenery as shall serve as framework, so that the ever-changing play of communication may go on with the accompaniment of outer dramatic accessories of deeds and words and events that on earth would have accompanied such communion on inner planes. In heaven, because we are severed from the bodily centre, there remains nothing that arises in and is inseparably connected with that centre and the body, no vanity nor fatigue, no decline of aspiration, no ill-will nor irritability, no pain, nor even the conception of pain. Pain arises when the desire for its good, on the part of any principle of consciousness, is thwarted. Pain is outer or inner; the latter may be for self or for others that are loved, and those may be loved physically or spiritually. Of our own outer and purely bodily pain we need not speak further, as, manifestly, it cannot exist in Devachan, where there is no outer body. Neither can there be memory of it, for memory is its more or less perfect reawakening in that kâmic nucleus which no longer attends the Self with its perpetual play of lower feeling.

The Self then is cut off from the possibility of the conception of outer pain, in himself or others; nor is he less beyond the reach of inner pain. Of other pains there are those of unsatisfied ambition, greed, vanity, lust, hate, anger, the feeling of being wronged, all springing from the lower nature, all impossible in Devachan, inconceivable to its inhabitants. On earth he can conceive them as well as bodily pain, and so can sympathize with others who endure them, because they exist actually or potentially in, and can be sympathetically created in, his own lower nature. The great earth-pain is loss of loved ones, and this cannot exist in Devachan. Our knowledge of the heavenly condition depends upon our acquired power to conceive that the dweller in Devachan is and remains in close touch with the selves of his friends, so far as all those states of feeling are concerned which have not to do with their lower kâmic planes of feeling and bodily natures. This again depends upon the acquired power of conceiving "I" as other than the body and its sensations; for that "I" once conceived is the heavenly "I," for by meditation while in the body the Devachanic plane can be reached. Pain arises from the sense of limitation in the mind, the sense of disorderliness in the body, but in Devachan nothing hinders the play of mind. Friends on earth cannot communicate their pain to those on the other side, for their pain even when purely mental is unsatisfied desire and hope, and in Devachan desire

is at once the very thing desired. They can only communicate the love that makes that communication desired, and with it such play of high and pure feeling as can mix with it. Devachan is the only *self*-limited scope of subjective action of the spiritual nucleus of the personal self, and that strictly speaking can desire nothing, for it is a stream of feeling cast into terrestrially acquired forms; its desire could only take the form of desire for feeling which is its action, and which is synchronous with the realization of it. Yoga and meditation are the desires for high feeling, which when attained is wisdom, and when the attained is reflected in mind it becomes knowledge. In life it is done in spite of the resistance of the body, and so the desire is not synchronous with its realization; after death the resistance disappears, and the self which then meditates stretches no detaining cords.

Of what use is the dweller in Devachan to those on earth? What are his activities? Even those of small soul, with a little circle of loved ones on earth whom they have left behind, a circle almost limited to the front page of the family Bible, can help that circle a little. If sin is ignorance, and *the* ignorance is the ignorance of the like selfhood of other selves, failure to feel their being, then even the inhabitant of heaven sins. But if on earth, even with a few, he has made relationships or found them karmically made, then, if that relationship be a little better than merely of personal centre to personal centre, if it express itself in other desires for them than that they should be handsome or get on in business and life, if it be other than selfishness which includes a few instead of one, then it is a feeling for them or a recognition of them as selves, a desire that they should grow in such good ways and do such good works as are within even the limited conceptions of that self, and so this feeling goes on in Devachan. The self pictures those worthy desires for their good as realized; and the vivid pictures it makes, and its strong feeling running always for its loved ones' good, is felt in degree by them, helps them, stimulates them, even protects them from their own worse selves, guides in a degree the action of the stream of elementals, whose apparently fortuitous play about us causes the outer "accidents" of our lives. And this is true, even if the desire and the love took on earth strange, crabbed, bigoted, unintelligent shape in thought.

If on earth we fight for a cause, as Theosophists do, thinking its success good for men, then the radiation of our inner energy towards this object cannot be stopped by death; no longer shining through our words and deeds, it takes as its vehicle the words and deeds of those who, remaining on earth, feel it and are moved by its inspiration; for the dead breathe still through the nostrils of the living. Other souls on the upper levels of Devachan do yet higher work, thinking the thoughts that are to

affect men in the far future, men and lives below men, and the planetary life in its totality; whilst beyond these again stand others before whose eyes is no illusion at all, living presences of past humanity, working still, open-eyed, wise, strong. Now, two questions remain. How shall we learn to create for ourselves a wise and useful hereafter? How teach of death to those who learn from us? Death looms so terrible because of the weight of its loneliness, the loneliness of the passage through the gate, the long and lonely sojourn in the fields beyond. So death is pictured, so misunderstood. To those who are wrapped in their business as the all in all of life, or in the pleasures that are of the body only, we can bring no comfort. We must wait till they have watched and learned. It is not so hopeless. After death comes a short moment when the illusions heaped up by the lower self melt away, and the past life is seen in its true significance and insignificance. The purpose of the incarnation is seen, the karmic necessities from former births that entailed its events, the worthlessness of the aims and pleasures pursued. Mistakes stand out in their true light, the wasted desires and their profitless fulfilment; all is contrasted with what it might have been, should have been, and was not. And before birth is a similar moment, when are seen the possibilities of growth in the impending incarnation. Though both these direct and unveiled visions are forgotten in the rush of life, some trace of their wisdom remains in the dim guidance of conscience and intuition. After many births they begin to have some effect, and the sum of their effects is the instinct that life in spirit and not of the world is the reality. Most men in degree have this instinct, and we can therefore help most men to face death. None of the chains of love forged on earth are broken by death, nor the channels of loving communication blocked. Only that while on earth the interplay of feeling direct from soul to soul lent life to otherwise dead or formal words and deeds, now that same continuing interplay, unbroken, unchecked, lends new life to the old words and deeds that fill the chambers of memory, and these once again serve as the symbols of the same inner presence which they symbolized on earth. To those whose work is for all mankind, whose friend is humanity, all whose hopes are for men, death should bring no terror, as it brings no change. The rays of their love and their hopes shine on as when on earth, making their way into the hearts of men, being to those who feel and to those who unknowingly receive and shelter them, help, protection and inspiration. For no such ray, whether sent out on earth or beyond, fails of its force, is lost, or can do other than secretly weave the cords that bind man to man, and bring nearer the final golden dawn. Let no poor heart on earth feel sore with the death of kin; if they were at one once they are at one always, the

barriers of death let through the light, and nature will not separate in future lives the friends and lovers of the past.

For ourselves we take the same cup of comfort. Beginning to withdraw desire from this or that passing phase in life, for the comfort of the body, for success or pleasure in life as an end in itself, we begin for the first time to feel our way among men, to feel in each a struggling self behind the rough, selfish, and forbidding outer form and ways, and so, joining hands with that, help the dim burning of its light. So, whether we work for one or many, for a circle or for mankind, we are beginning a work which no power and no change can compel us to abandon. We cannot follow two opposing paths at once, and any work upon ourselves or others that is not of the body and the self centred and reflected therein, any developing force that moves the soul towards beauty, whether of sound, or form, or colour, any love that finds unselfish satisfaction beyond the self, any effort to understand the forces and lives that sustain the universe and culminate in man, all these are movements of the soul that persist through death, and, stretching across all the cycles of rebirth, pass on into the undeclining life.

HERBERT CORYN.

BRAHMA.

If the red slayer think he slays,
  Or if the slain think he is slain,
They know not well the subtle ways
  I keep, and pass, and turn again.

Far or forgot to me is near;
  Shadow and sunlight are the same;
The vanished gods to me appear;
  And one to me are shame and fame.

They reckon ill who leave me out;
  When me they fly, I am the wings;
I am the doubter and the doubt,
  And I the hymn the Brahmin sings.

The strong gods pine for my abode,
  And pine in vain the sacred Seven;
But thou, meek lover of the good!
  Find me, and turn thy back on heaven.

R. W. Emerson.

"I am everything that has been, that is, and that shall be; and no mortal has ever yet been able to withdraw my veil. The fruit which I have brought forth is the Sun."

Inscription on a statue of Isis. Proclus on Timæus, p. 30.

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